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# PRESBYTERY

AND

# NOT PRELACY

THE

# SCRIPTURAL AND PRIMITIVE POLITY,

PROVED FROM THE TESTIMONIES OF

SCRIPTURE; THE FATHERS; THE SCHOOLMEN; THE REFORMERS; AND THE ENGLISH AND ORIENTAL CHURCHES.

ALSO,

## THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY;

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF

## THE ANCIENT CULDEES, AND OF ST. PATRICK.

---

BY THOMAS SMYTH,

AUTHOR OF LECTURES ON THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION, ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM, ECCLESIASTICAL CATECHISM, ETC.

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Show them the form of the house and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them. EZEKIEL, 43: 11.

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THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO THE

PRESBYTERIAN, CONGREGATIONAL, REFORMED DUTCH, GERMAN LUTHERAN, METHODIST, AND BAPTIST DENOMINATIONS,

WHOSE

COMMON PRINCIPLES OF ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER,

IN CONTRAST WITH THOSE OF

PRELACY AND POPERY,

IT IS MAINLY DESIGNED

TO ADVOCATE.

8510

# PREFACE.

As a sufficient demand has been made upon the patience of the reader, in the body of this work, it will not be increased by any lengthened preface. All that will be done, therefore, will be to offer a few words of explanation.

As to the necessity for the work, nothing need be said. This is now universally admitted. A renewed and thorough discussion of the great principles involved in the exclusive assumptions of prelacy, is forced upon us by the open and repeated assaults made by this bold enemy, upon the rights and privileges of all other christian denominations. The conviction is therefore general, that this controversy must become the leading topic of the age. Manuals are needed, ecclesiastical catechisms are needed, tracts, sermons, and discourses are needed, and treatises, like the present, are also needed. The one does not supersede the other, nor render it the less necessary. Let every man, in his place, and according to his opportunity, come up to the help of the cause of truth, charity, purity, and liberty, against a power which is once more forging for us the chains of spiritual despotism and superstition.

The aim of this work is catholic, and not sectarian. The author appears as the advocate, not of a party, but of all non-episcopal denominations. He includes under the term presbytery, those generic principles which are common to Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Reformed Dutch, Lutherans, Baptists, and Methodists. In some points he will be found

differing with members of each of these bodies, but most generally he hopes to be found agreeing with the liberal-minded of them all. He would re-claim for all these parties the application, in a wide sense, of the term presbytery. He would thus hope to draw closer the bonds of christian truth, harmony, and affection, by which we are leagued together. This work he offers to them all, as a peace-offering — an Irenicum — and a challenge to greater union and coöperation against our common foes. Our differences are few, compared to our points of agreement. They are as nothing, when once contrasted with those walls of separation, by which prelatists and Romanists would exclude us from any inheritance in Israel. The Philistines are upon us. They have vowed the destruction of our citadels. They build their hopes upon our disunion. Divided we fall, but united we are sure of victory. Shall we not, then, rally around the standard of our common principles, for the defence of our common rights, and pour our united forces upon our common enemies? If this work shall in any measure foster this spirit, and promote these ends, the labors of its author will be rewarded. It was, of course, necessary for him to speak as a presbyterian, in the strict meaning of that word, and in many cases to draw his illustrations from this denominational system, to which he is conscientiously attached, and to explain and defend it against misrepresentation. But, in the main arguments of the work, there will be nothing, he hopes, to offend any.

The design of this work was to condense the substance of the innumerable treatises which have been written on the subject, and to arrange their various topics in a more complete and comprehensive order, so as to present them in as perfect, clear, and satisfactory a manner, as the limits of a single volume will permit. How far the author has succeeded, he leaves the reader to determine. He hopes that in the arrangement, in many of the arguments, in many of the topics introduced, and in the whole spirit and bearing of the work, there will be found sufficient originality to interest those who are most familiar with

the subject. No expense has been spared in collecting in London, and on the Continent, all that is valuable, and that was procurable, on this great controversy. Of the toil undergone for years past, in perusing, collating, and digesting these works, it is unnecessary to speak. The author does not profess, in every case, to have examined the works of the fathers and schoolmen, for himself. Many of them he has. But where he has not done so, he has been careful not to quote from them, without having abundant reason for believing that he might fully rely on the source of his information. This will be found indicated in connection with the quotations made. Since, however, he relies altogether, as a positive argument, upon the authority of the Bible, he has devoted to the scriptural argument the largest portion of the volume.

Every effort has been made to compress what was written within the briefest compass. About one half of what was prepared has, therefore, been omitted. It was found necessary, also, to leave out the chapters on the Republicanism, Liberality, Catholicity, the Security and Efficiency of Presbytery. Some of these topics will be found discussed in another and smaller volume, entitled 'Ecclesiastical Republicanism,' to which the reader is referred.

In conclusion, it is hoped that the manner in which the work is prepared will render it more acceptable to the reader, who is requested to unite with the author in the heartfelt prayer that He, whose cause is at stake, would make this, and every similar effort of his servants, effectual to the furtherance of His glory, in the promotion of peace, purity, and charity in his churches, and the overthrow of all error, bigotry, will-worship, and superstition.

*Charleston, S. C.*, 1843.

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# BOOK I.

PRESBYTERY THE SCRIPTURAL AND APOSTOLIC ORDER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

# CHAPTER I.

## THE TRUE APOSTOLICAL OR MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION CLAIMED BY PRESBYTERIANS.

### § 1. *Introductory remarks.*

We have in a former work conducted our readers through an extended examination of the mysterious and transcendental doctrine of prelatical apostolical succession.[1] And, surely, in no other instance has there been such a manifestation of the blinding influence of controversy, in magnifying into monstrous proportion some limb of the body of truth, and in embodying, to the diseased eye, some self-originated theory, in the habiliments of divinity. The Persians, who are heresiarchs from the pure sultan faith, in consequence of their desperate struggles to maintain the claims of Ali to the true succession of the impostor's vacant office, have been led to regard him as a divine being, nay, even as God, and to give him, practically, the first place in their reverence and affections. And in the same way prelatists, by their ceaseless efforts to substantiate their intolerant and popish dogma of the succession, have been led to exalt this doctrine so far as to make it, practically, the great fundamental tenet and corner-stone of their religion. The church has been made to displace Christ, who is its only and ever-living Head. The ministry has been substituted for the divine and omnipresent energies of the Holy Spirit. And christianity, pure, spiritual, and heavenly, has been transformed into a system of outward rites and ordinances. This leaven has not only begun to work, but is now extensively diffusing itself through the mass of society. An alarm has been blown in Zion. The voice of warning, rebuke, and condemnation, is now heard from

1) The Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the exclusive assumptions of Popery and High-Churchism, 1841.

high places, while the enemy is continually rejoicing over fresh deserters added to his ranks. Every where, and in all denominations, there is an earnest expectation of coming changes, and of the hour and the power of darkness. All are on the alert. All are inquiring after the old paths, and examining well into the foundations upon which they stand, and the claims which they are warranted in maintaining. A deep and growing conviction exists, that there is but one foundation upon which any doctrine or practice can be established as of divine institution, and that is, the word of God; and that whatever wants its sanction and support, if it pretends to divine authority, or to be an article of the faith, involves a blasphemous assumption of the divine prerogatives.

It is full time that the presbyterian church also should be up and doing. Every day brings with it fresh arguments for activity and zeal. Every day shows us, that men are letting go their principles, being driven about by every wind of doctrine, and beguiled by the cunning craftiness of specious and sophistical pretensions. It is time for us to realize the truth, that the fault of all this apostacy and insecurity, rests mainly with ourselves. We have suffered the rising generation to grow up ignorant of our principles, and of those strong and invincible scriptural grounds upon which our system 'is builded of God.' And thus have we beheld many, who professed to be the friends, and even the pillars, of our church, forsaking us and becoming our warmest opponents. Let us then learn wisdom by our past experience, and from defeat reap victory. And let every professed presbyterian, feel that he owes it to the church with which he is connected, or in which he has been brought up; to the community in which he lives; to all those from whom he differs; to himself; and above all to the divine Head of the church; to investigate the nature, the grounds, and the principles of presbyterianism, that he may give a reason of the hope that is in him to every one that asketh it. Parents should teach their children, teachers their scholars, and bishops their flocks, those 'first principles of the oracles of God,' which are the elements of our faith, and the guides to our practice. We will not glory in ourselves, or in what we are personally, but well may we glory in belonging to a church that is scriptural in her doctrine, apostolic in her constitution, and primitive in her discipline.

More especially should this spirit animate all who are permitted to receive ordination at the hands of our church — to minister at her altars, and to preach through her the unsearchable riches of Christ. The apostle Paul, who was among the

greatest of all the apostles, in gifts preëminent, in graces heavenly, in labors more abundant, in success more illustrious; in addressing the outcast and perishing Gentiles, could exultingly declare, 'inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.' And shall not they who are successors to this same apostle, in his ordinary ministry, and by the laying on of the same hands; and who are sent forth to the same Gentile race, for the same glorious end; shall they not also magnify their office? True, they are not apostles, as he was an apostle; they are not, as he was, called by the immediate voice of the Son of God; endued with the plenitude of all divine and supernatural gifts; filled with the inspiration of the ever-blessed Spirit, and commissioned as an ambassador to the whole world. It was not, however, in this extraordinary capacity, as legate of the exalted Redeemer, the apostle rejoiced; but in that ordinary character of a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which he was empowered to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the long lost Gentiles. It was as he stood forth the exemplar and representative of all future ministers of Christ, in all coming ages of the church, the apostle magnified his office. It was as by the rich grace of God he had been made a preacher of righteousness, a coworker with other presbyters, ordained by their hands, associated with them in the ordination of those who should be able to teach, and to set apart others also, that Paul gloried.

As presbyters, therefore, who have been called of God, though not immediately, yet mediately by his Holy Spirit; who have been called, also, by his church, through the offices of men chosen and appointed for this work; and whose high calling it is to speak unto the Gentiles the wonderful things of God; shall not we also, who are put unto this ministry, magnify our office, not in the spirit of boasting, but of humble and devout thanksgiving? Our office? it is divine in its origin, holy in its services, heavenly in its aim; unlimited in the field opened by it to the sublimest powers of man; and transcending all human thought in the glory and the grandeur of its everlasting issues. The office of the presbyterate, which is also the office of the episcopate, is the ascension gift of the exalted Mediator, and the essential bond and preserver of his church. There is no other office in the church, or beyond it, equal in power, influence, and glory. This is the only bishopric recognised in scripture, or authorized thereby; the truly primitive and apostolical episcopacy, in and by which there is preserved, in the church of the living God, an unbroken succession of faithful heralds of the cross.

## § 2. *Our position defined.*

We are thus led to that truth, upon the demonstration of which we would now enter — the apostolicity of a presbyterian ministry, in contrariety to that which is prelatical. Not that we can hope to preclude captious doubt and cavilling objection, where the very nature of the subject admits not of absolute demonstration; but that we hope to produce sufficient evidence to warrant the most unwavering assurance of those who are willing to abide by the truth of God, to the exclusion of all human authority, tradition, and the will-worship and policy of men. We affirm, then, that presbyter-bishops are the only bishops recognised in the word of God: that they are empowered to discharge all the offices and functions of the christian ministry: that they succeed to all that authority, and to all those duties, which have been devolved, by the apostles, upon their successors in the ordinary and permanent ministry of the gospel; and that there is no other order of ministers, distinct from and superior to them, to whom is given the exclusive possession of all ecclesiastical authority. We therefore openly controvert and deny the truth of the position laid down by prelatists, that there are three original and essentially distinct orders in the ministry — bishops, presbyters, and deacons; each instituted by divine right, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost: and each of them essential to the valid constitution of a church of Christ. This theory of ecclesiastical polity and of ministerial castes, is, we think, improperly denominated episcopacy, since episcopacy 'is allowed to be but an accident to the system,'[1] and since episcopacy, whether interpreted of the office, and thus meaning superintendence and oversight, or of the officer, who is called ἐπίσκοπος or bishop, is claimed by presbyterians, and is fully asserted by them.[2] We reject, therefore, prelacy, not episcopacy. We abjure modern and not primitive, diocesan and not scriptural episcopacy.

## § 3. *Apostolicity claimed by presbyterians in all ages.*

So strangely confident have the advocates of this system of prelacy become, through the great forbearance and silence of their opponents, that nothing is more common in the

1) Oxford Tracts, vol. i. p. 11. See also Lect. on Apos. Suc. Lect. i.

2) Clemens's Romanus, speaks of presbyters who finished their duties in their episcopacy.

writings of its advocates, both Romish, Anglican, and American, than the assertion, which we are sure we have met with in some fifty different places, that to such an episcopacy, and to such a ministerial succession from the apostles, presbyterians lay no claim and make no manner of pretension.[1] That such asseverations must arise from profound ignorance of what presbyterianism is, and what presbyterian authors and standards clearly affirm, and are not put forth as intentional misstatements, we can readily believe; since, in all the various prelatical writers we have examined, we have found little beyond the hackneyed repetition of some garbled extracts; or of some partial admissions, given in the kindness of friendship and at the prompting of liberality; or of the numerous burlesque caricatures of our presbyterian polity and doctrine. These seem to be handed down from generation to generation, like the armor of ancient knights, and with even a more careful anxiety than the line of prelatical succession itself.[2] However this may be, certain it is, that prelatical writers practically exemplify, and in the most striking manner, (what they are so fond of charging upon others,) a belief in the very powerful efficacy, upon the generality of men, of bold, fearless, and constant assertion.

Now, like every other error, this affirmation rests upon some truth. To the powers involved in the prelatical doctrine of apostolical succession, prelatists are undoubtedly correct in saying, that presbyterians lay no claim. We repudiate all such assumed prerogatives, as equally contrary to scripture, reason, and charity. And while we do plead for 'the divine right of Paul's presbytery,' as Rutherford describes it, yet not in any such sense as to exclude those who are not presbyterian in polity, while sound and orthodox in the catholic faith, from a full participation in all the essential benefits of the Church of Christ, though self-excluded from what we esteem some of its important privileges. And as our prelatic friends seem to calculate largely upon the very boldness with which they represent their church as the only body which even pretends to possess this ministerial succession from the apostles, 'the only body, therefore, which can be certain that they have

1) E. g. Bishop Kenrick's Theol. Dogmat. vol. i. p. 235–246; Oxford Tracts, vol. i. p. 232; Works of the Rev. William Jones, vol. iv. p. 494. So the Romanist, who replied to Dr. Sherlock on the Notes of the Church, says, 'They — Luther's or Calvin's disciples — do not so much as pretend to succession.' *

2) Of this, and the spirit of misstating, some illustrations will be given in the course of the work. We have materials enough from our own reading to present a very full exhibition, were it necessary.

* See Notes of the Ch. Ex. p. 54.

the true word and sacraments to give unto the people,'[1] it may be well to show, that, however deficient we may be thought by any in our arguments, we come not behind the very chiefest in the confident assertion of our apostolicity both in our ministerial and in our doctrinal succession. We will therefore present to our readers some specimens of the manner in which presbyterians, both ancient and modern, have been wont to represent their claims.

And first, as it regards the Culdees, that noble fountain of gospel truth and order.

'Bede,' says Dr. Jamieson,[2] 'gives an extract of a letter from Laurence, who succeeded Augustine as Bishop of Canterbury A. D. 605, to the Scots who inhabited Ireland, in which he says: "Bishop Dagan, coming to us, *not only refused to eat with us*, but even to take his repast in the same house in which we were entertained." This Dagan, it is said, came from the monastery of Bangor, in Ireland, to be bishop to the Scots. It is evident that he treated the votaries of Rome, not excepting the bishop of Canterbury himself, as if they had been actually excommunicated. He viewed them as men with whom he was not *so much as to eat;* nay, as even communicating pollution to the place where they did eat.' 'It is evident, that this pertinacity of the Culdees greatly piqued the Romanists, who deemed it the highest presumption, in men living in such distant regions, to pretend in any thing to differ from those who pleaded the transmission of the Keys from the apostle Peter.'

Express mention is made of these Culdees in the second council of Cabilon, or Chalons, A. D. 813. 'There are,' it is said in their acts, 'in certain places Scots, who call themselves bishops, and contemning many, without the license of their lords or superiors, *ordain presbyters and deacons*.' Cummian, in the seventh century, who was induced to conform to the Romish church, upbraids the Culdees with dissenting from other churches, and tells them it was heretical pravity to affirm that Rome erred and that Britons alone were wise.[3] Oswald, prince of Northumberland, who had received baptism among the Irish, sent to Hy for a Culdee bishop, taking no notice of Paulinus, the Romish bishop at York, nor of James, the deacon, his companion.[4]

Clemens, a Scot, in the eighth century, who was given over to the secular power and devoted to the flames, on the ground

1) Oxf. Tr. vol. i. p. 44.
2) See Hist. Acc. of the Ancient Culdees, Edinb. 1811, 4to. p. 221–226.
3) Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland, p. 109.
4) Ibid, p. 109.

of his opposition to the authority claimed by the Romish church, among other things, 'did reprove Boniface, that he did so advance the authority of the Roman bishop, seeing all teachers are equally successors of the apostles.'[1]

Nor could any thing induce the Culdees to conform to the Romish church. They chose rather to forfeit their church and property than desert their principles, and thus allowed themselves to be expelled from all their ancient seats, until they were gradually lost among the growing multitude of Romanized christians.[2]

To this remarkable testimony of the Culdees may be added that of the Waldenses and the Albigenses, of whom we are informed, that, amid all their bloody and ferocious persecutions, whatever names of reproach might be heaped upon them by their enemies, they would acknowledge no appellation save that of 'apostolicals,' inasmuch as they claimed to be the uncorrupted successors and followers of St. Paul and the other apostles.[3] They testified with their blood, that 'the polity of the church of Rome was neither good nor holy, nor established by Jesus Christ,' and that 'archbishops, bishops, and other prelates ordained by the church of Rome, were not true.'[4]

The same claims are put forth by all the churches of the reformation, which in their confessions harmonize in representing their ministry — which was that of presbyters — as of divine institution, as apostolical, and as no new appointment, but 'most ancient, and from God himself.'[5]

Calvin thus speaks; 'Whereas I have indiscriminately called those who govern the churches, bishops, presbyters, and pastors, I have done so according to the usage of scripture . . . . for whoever executes the office of ministers of the gospel, to them the scriptures give the title of bishops.'[6] He thus teaches, that 'there is one episcopacy which is Christ's alone, whereof *every minister of the gospel* has an entire and equal share.'

In his response to the work of Hadrian Saravia, in defence of the hierachy, Beza, alluding to his own tract, 'De

1) Hoinbar Annal. lib. 3, &c., in Jamieson's History of the Culdees, p. 237.

2) See Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland, p. 112.

3) See Faber's Albigenses, p. 195, Blair's Waldenses.

4) Allix, on the Anc. Ch. of the Albig. p. 177, 178.

5) See quoted in B. 2, ch. iii.

6) See Comment. on Titus 1, 5. See also Instit. B. 4, ch. 3, § 8. Comment. on Phil. 1 : 1, and Inst. Lib. 4, cap. 4, 513 and 14, and on Eph. 4 : 11. For a complete collection of all the passages from Calvin, bearing on this subject, and a refutation of the ignorant and wilful misrepresentations of his sentiments, see Dr. Miller on the Ministry. 2d ed. Part ii. Letter vi.

Triplici Episcopatu,' or the triple Episcopacy, thus speaks. 'Let those who will go now and wonder, that a triple episcopate should be constituted by us: one, namely, that which is evidently *divine*, constituted by the apostles, and which we desire to be restored, another human, by which an order (or matter of arrangement) was imperceptibly changed into a grade, (or distinct rank,) which may truly be enjoyed by those who are persuaded, that the right use of it can be renewed and maintained; a third, oligarchical and tyrannical, nay, even satanic, which is both to be abominated in the manifestly anti-christian despotism of Rome, and to be reformed from the word of God, in the still remaining oligarchical domination of episcopacy.'[1]

This very claim to superiority, on the ground of a more undoubted apostolicity in their views of ministerial order and succession, was the foundation of all the puritan arguments. It was for maintaining, that the Church of England had declined from the ancient and apostolic church, that he wished it brought back to a purer model, and that bishops and presbyters were, in scripture, one and the same office — that Cartwright, in 1570, was expelled from his office in college by Archbishop Whitgift, who found it much easier to drive him from his home and friends, than to overcome the resistless force of his argumentation.[2]

Thus also Axton, in his examination before the bishop of Litchfield, in 1567, when asked why he did not consider him to be a lawful bishop, answered.[3] 'For three causes especially: — the first is, for that you are not ordained a bishop by the consent of the eldership. The second, because you are not ordained to be a bishop over any one flock, for you say you are a bishop over the whole diocese, and then you are a bishop over many flocks; and yet you do not think that you are bishop (that is, pastor) over any of these congregations. The third, because you are not chosen to be a governor in the church of God by the election of the people.'

The church of Scotland laid the very basis of her reformation, in the deep scriptural principles of ministerial parity and presbyterial episcopacy.[4] She resisted any conformity or subjection to the English hierarchy, through a century of alter-

1) Respons. and Sarav. p. 177, quoted in orig. in Plea for Presb. p. 124.

2) See a Life of Cartwright, prefixed to Hanbury's ed. of Hooker, vol. i. p. cxxxvii, and Price's Hist. of Prof. Nonconf. vol. i. pp. 217, 218.

3) See in Life of Cartwright, p. 213, and see also Smith's Reply, in 1567, in do. p. 207.

4) See this fully shown by Professor Jamieson, in his Nazianzeni Quezela Glasgow, 1697, pt. i. ch. 7, and p. 219.

nate triumph and defeat, of bloodshed, suffering, and death. She always thought herself superior to that church, in being presbyterian and not prelatic in her government; in the completeness and perfection of her reformation; and in the piety, devotion, and pastoral character of her clergy.[1] In the debate which her divines held with King Charles, they insisted that presbytery was *de jure divino*, by divine appointment.[2] Such also was the decision of the Westminster Assembly of divines, until, by the growing power and tumult of the Erastian party, it was decided, that presbyterianism was merely lawful.[3] When parliament imposed the oath which contained a clause to endeavor the extirpation of prelacy, many of the members of this assembly, among whom were Dr. Burgess, and Mr. Gataker, refused to take it, lest they should seem to condemn all episcopacy. The language, therefore, was modified so as to define the human inventions of the prelacy in contradistinction to the primitive episcopacy.[4] In an answer to the questions of the parliament touching *jus divinum*, published in 1646, it is said, 'our ministers are descended from the apostles whom Christ ordained to preach, and they were sent to all nations to convert men to the christian faith, and they also ordained elders in every church in every city or town, and after them they left others in their places to do it. Tit. 1 : 5. And thus church officers were ordained by them of their own calling, successively, ever since.'[5] The position taken by the provincial assembly of London, which, after the dissolution of the Westminster Assembly, was regarded as the organ of the presbyterian body, may be seen at full length in their two famous and incomparable treatises, 'The Divine Right of Church Government,'[6] and 'The Divine Right of the Gospel ministry.'[7] Indeed, the whole force of the presbyterian body, in those troublous times, was employed in defending their own ministry, and that of the previously existing hierarchy, against the charge of anti-christianism and nullity, so furiously levelled against them by the congregationalists of the Cromwell

1) See Life and Times of Alex. Henderson, by Dr. Aiton, pp. 199, 181.

2) Ibid, pp. 546, 558, 559.

3) Ibid, p. 560.

4) Baxter on Episcop. p. 2, pt. 2, and Theophilus Thernorcus in his Vind. of the Cov., not to be against all manner of Episcopacy. See quoted in The Case of the Accommodation Examined, p. 37, and in Appendix, p. 99.

5) London, 1646, pp. 16, 17.

6) Jus Divinum Regiminiis Ecclesiastici, or the Divine Right, &c., asserted and evidenced by the Holy Scriptures; I have the *third edition*, London. 1654, 4to. See pp. 14, 27, 32, 102, 267, 268.

7) Jus Divinum Ministerii. Evangelici, or, &c., London, 1654. See Introd. pp. 3, 26, and pt. 2, pp. 2, 16, 17, 19, 22, 24, 33, 38, &c. These two works would be well worth republication by our Board.



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school.[1] And the only question which excited any serious controversy then, was, not whether the ministerial succession of the presbyterians had come down to them unbroken from the apostles, but whether it had not become altogether polluted and destroyed, by descending through the foul channels of the prelacy.[2] 'By all which it appeareth,' to use the words of Baxter, 1. 'how falsely we are charged to be against all episcopacy. 2. how falsely and deceitfully all those writers state the case, who . . . . make them believe that our controversy is, whether there should be *any episcopacy*, and not what *kind of episcopacy* it should be.'[3] Not less pointed are the words of Mr. Boyse, who says, 'how strange and unaccountable is it, then, to find the generality of those who write on this subject, so constantly confounding the parochial with diocesan episcopacy, as if it were the same thing, when the latter is so utterly inconsistent with the former, and so entirely subversive of it; and if this primitive parochial episcopacy be all that is contended for, I think the dispute about the divine right of it may be laid aside' . . . . 'since we could rejoice in the restoration of this ancient parochial or congregational episcopacy.'[4] 'For parochial episcopacy we do entirely own the divine right of it,'[5] 'and it is utterly untrue, that either the dissenters, or any of the reformed church, either censure or want parochial episcopacy.'[6] Milton, in like manner, styles one of his treatises 'Of Prelatical Episcopacy,' in which he shows that presbyters are true bishops.[7] In his work 'Of Reformation in England,'[8] he says, 'it,' the presbyterian discipline, 'is but episcopacy reduced to what it should be: were it not that the tyranny of prelates, under the name of bishops, had made our ears tender, and startling, we might call every good minister a bishop, as every bishop, yea, the apostles themselves are called ministers, and the angels ministering spirits, and the ministers again angels.'[9]

It may therefore be affirmed, that the reformers and presbyterian divines generally, both thought and taught, that the scriptural episcopacy was presbyterian parity: and that, when

1) The soberest terms then usually applied to them, were 'Baal's Priests,' 'Anti-christian priests,' 'Black coats, &c., see Firmin's Separation Examined, p. 92. Byfield on the Church of Christ. Vindiciæ Vinciarum, and the works above referred to.

2) See Div. Right of the Ministry, pt. 2. pp. 29, 42.

3) Treatise on Episcop. ch. iv. § 80, 81, pp. 43, 44.

4) Account of the Ancient Episcopacy, pref. pp. x, xi, Lond. 1712, and in Wks. Fol. Lond. 1728.

5) Ibid, p. 209.

6) Ibid, p. 287.

7) Wks. vol. 1, pp. 60, 64, &c.

8) Wks. vol. 1, p. 52.

9) See prose Wks. vol. 1, p. 52,

charged by the papists with having abolished episcopacy in their churches, their reply uniformly was, that they had not destroyed episcopacy, but had only reduced it to the true, original, apostolic, and scriptural standard.[1]

## § 4. *Presbytery is the true episcopacy.*

We presbyterians, therefore, have ever been accustomed to regard our system of ecclesiastical polity as the true and scriptural episcopacy instituted by Christ and his apostles; and our ministry as embodying the true apostolical succession in 'the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship and authority.' But whereas prelatists lodge this episcopate, with all its tremendous power, in one individual, who lords it over God's heritage, our church constitutes every minister a bishop, and lodges the episcopate, as a system of government, in the hands of ecclesiastical courts, composed of assembled bishops and elders. These form our parochial session; our district presbytery; our diocesan synod; and our national convention or general assembly; so that the power of one single prelatical bishop is divided among some hundred of our bishops and ruling elders. As every minister of our church is authoritatively regarded as a bishop, these several courts might with as much verbal propriety have been denominated episcopacies, as presbyteries, and our church episcopal, just as properly as presbyterian. Neither did she ever disclaim the former, or assume the latter. Our church is comprehensively both episcopal and presbyterian, and she is distinctively neither. She is episcopal, as she claims for all her ministers the title of bishop. She is presbyterian, as she recognises a perfect original parity in the official character and qualifications of her ministers. But these are

1) See Div. Right of the Min. pt. 2, pp. 39–44, 49. Edinb. Presb. Rev. Ap. 1839, p. 638. Lord Brooke on Episcopacy, p. 66, &c. These testimonies might be multiplied to any extent, were it necessary. See Neal's Hist. vol. 4, p. 252. Corbet on the Church, Lond. 1684, pp. 135, 169. Presbyterian Ordin. defended and proved, by Rev. Noah Welles, N. Y. 1763, p. 71, and his Vindic. of Presb. Ord. New Haven, 1767, pp. 10, 15, 156, 157. That it was claimed by the early presbyterians in S. C. see Hewett's Hist. of S. C. vol. 2, p. 252, and Dr. Ramsay's Hist. vol. 2, p. 45; see also An Apology for the Ch. of Scotland, by Rev. J. Cumming, Lond. 1837, p. 13. Miss. Sermons and Speeches of Members of Synod of Ulster, Ireland; Belfast, 1834, p. 69. Dr. Miller, on the Min. &c. passim. Presb. Defend. Lond. 1839, p. 118. Report of the Edinb. Celebration of the Assembly of 1638, pp. 17, 18. Dr. Chalmers's Speech on the Auchterander Case, p. 14, and Lect. on Relig. Establishments, pp. 22, 23. See also the strong language of Dr. Wilson, in his Prim. Govt. of the Churches, p. 279, et passim. Baxter's Treatise on Episcop. ch. iv. § 80, 81, pp. 43, 44. Manual of Presbytery, by Mr. Lorimar, Edinb. 1842, pp. 259–278. Cumming's Apol. for the Ch. of Scotland, pp. 12, 17, 20, 25, 32.

but her specific characteristics, by which she is distinguished from other branches of the church. Generically she is a church of Christ — a true, pure, and original branch of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. The sentiment of every presbyterian, who understands the true nature of his church, is that of the justly celebrated Dr. Henry Cooke, of Ireland; 'Our church,' says he, 'is presbyterian by distinction, but episcopalian by principle; I am an episcopalian, Paul being my witness. Humble though I be, I hold myself to be as much a bishop as the archbishop of Canterbury. Our church is ordered with bishops, presbyters or elders, and deacons, and if they, (the high-church prelatists,) refuse to concede to us the title of church, we shall take it at the hands of Paul, and be contented with his certificate of ordination, should theirs be niggardly withheld.'[1] 'It is, in short, the happiness of our church that we have such an episcopacy, and we glory in it.'[2]

That there has been, therefore, a perpetual and uninterrupted succession in the church of Christ, first of faithful members, and secondly of true and valid ministers, constituting in every age, however scattered, persecuted, or obscured, a holy, catholic, and visible church; this, as presbyterians, we constantly affirm.

### § 5. *The apostles were both extraordinary and ordinary ministers.*

But here it is necessary to explain. When we say that presbyters are the successors of the apostles, we mean that they are so in every thing wherein the apostles can be succeeded, for in many things they cannot. Perpetual ministries are one thing, temporary gifts are another thing. In the organization of any church or kingdom there must be extraordinary officers with extraordinary powers, for the accomplishment of the extraordinary duties then to be performed. Now the term apostle, as we have already shown, is susceptible of a special and a general meaning, and is used in both senses in the New Testament.[3] But in that peculiar sense in which it is given only to the twelve, this term cannot be applied to any order of ordinary christian ministers, since the apostle Paul zealously defends his character and author-

1) Speech at Manchester, in 1839.
2) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 404.
3) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. x. 'For no one has ever imagined, that because St. Barnabas, Epaphroditus, and many others, are called in scripture apostles, that there was therefore no difference between them and the twelve. It would be a gross fallacy to conclude that all who are styled apostles were on a par with the twelve.' Saravia, p. 220.

ity against the 'false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ,' by affirming that he had received his apostleship 'not from man but from God.' But this, says Hadrian Saravia, 'would have been an absurd mode of reasoning, had the name *apostle* been common to many who were not of the company of the twelve, but had been sent of men, and by men, and not immediately by God.'[1] On the other hand this same term may, in a general sense, be used of persons sent on any account, or in any manner;[2] and may thus be applied to all christian ministers, since it is their office to declare the truth, and since they have been called to this office by their brethren.

The apostles, then, are to be considered in a double aspect.[3] They are to be regarded in that peculiar character in which they are especially denominated THE APOSTLES, and in which they fulfilled the miraculous, intransmissible functions of Christ's representatives and ambassadors;[4] and in that more general character in which they are simply apostles or ministers of Christ. We are, therefore, to ascertain what belonged to them personally, and what was common to them and to all other ministers of Christ. We must discover what was peculiar to them — to their times — and to the existing circumstances in which they were called to act — and what characterized them as the exemplars or prototypes of all other ministers unto the end of the world. That in their official character the apostles could not delegate their authority or have any successors, *in idem officium*, is generally admitted, and has been fully proved.[5] But that, in their general character, as the first of an endless multitude of heralds of the cross, they have had successors, is as firmly to be believed, unless we will altogether subvert the church of Christ.[6]

To assist our minds in thus contemplating the apostles, let the following observations be considered. In the first place we are to remember, that before ordering the ministry of his

1) On the Priesthood, p. 90. See also Lord Barrington's Wk. vol. ii.

2) Ibid., p. 88.

3) See Campbell's Lect. on Eccl. Hist. Lect. iv. p. 66. 2d edit. See also Dr. Cook's View of Christianity, vol. ii. pp. 3, 4. Owen's Wks. vol. xix. p. 200.

4) See a very fine representation of the peculiar character of the apostles, in Gaussen on Inspiration, p. 300, &c.

5) Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. x.

6) 'I do not deny but many things in the apostles were personal, &c. Yet, that all their gifts ended with their lives, and no part of their charge and power remained to their after-comers, may neither be confessed by us nor affirmed by any, unless we mean wholly to subvert the church of Christ.' 1. Bp. Bilson. Perp. Govt. of the Chr. Ch. ch. ix. p. 105. See also Bishop Davenant, on Colossians, vol. i. p. lxii.

church in its permanent form, our Lord Jesus Christ, as a wise master-builder, had to lay the foundations of his church, promulge his doctrines, and legislate for all future times. These things made it necessary that his first ministers should be chosen by himself: should have an unlimited mission; should in every thing pertaining to their office be directed by the Holy Spirit as an infallible guide: and should be assisted in their work by the possession of miraculous and supernatural gifts. These powers were superadded to their ordinary endowments, and were adapted to those extraordinary functions which were temporary, and which, when once completed, were for ever done away.[1] In the second place we are to remember, that the twelve were ministers or preachers before they were apostles. They could not be apostles of the Christian church before the death and resurrection of Christ, since it is upon these events the church is founded. Till *then*, the kingdom of heaven was proclaimed as 'at hand,' as coming, and in a state of preparation. Till then, Christ and his disciples remained in connection with the Jewish church, observing its ordinances, worshipping in its assemblies, recognising its divine institution, and respecting all its laws. And then only were the heralds of the Christian church commissioned to go forth and to announce it as established.[2] That the apostles were not even presbyters, during our Lord's ministry, we are bound to believe, by the Tridentine Council, on pain of being accursed.[3] The

1) See a very clear, scriptural, and full account of the offices, gifts, and powers granted to the apostles, and peculiar to them, by Lord Barrington, in Wks. vol. ii. § vi. vii. and viii.

2) See Sage's Vind. of the Princ. of the Cyp. Age, c. vi. sect. 6. Plea for Presb. p. 175. See this affirmed by Bishop Heber, in Life of Taylor. See Wks. vol. i p. cxxxv. Jer. Taylor, Wks. vol. xiii. p. 19, et seq.

'Granting every thing,' says Dr. Bowden, Wks. on Episcop. vol. i. p. 176, 'that some Episcopalians have contended for, still it remains true that the Church of CHRIST, in its explicit, permanent form, was not established till after our Lord's resurrection. I am much of the mind of Bishop Sage upon that point.' See also Saravia on the Priesthood. Stillingfleet Iren. p. 117, 118, and Par ii. p. 218. Whitby, Annot. Luke 10: 1. Dr. Hammond on ibid. Bellarmine de Pontif. lib. iv. cap. 25. Sinclair's Vind. of the Episc. or Apost. Succ. p. 16. 'And that day at whose dawn the church as yet had not an existence nor a name, had before its close beheld that church receive into its bosom three thousand souls.' Woodgate's Bampton Lect. p. 100. See also Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. ch. i. p. 13. Hinds's Hist. of the Rise and Progress of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 134, 149, 153, and 175. Pratt's Old Paths, p. 59. See also Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. § 4, p. 14, &c., where he shows that the great truth witnessed by the apostles was the resurrection of Christ, by a great abundance of scripture proofs. This point is also frequently urged by Archbishop Whateley on the Kingdom of Christ. Essay ii. § i. p. 54. Eng. ed. and p. 108.

3) If any one shall 'Say, that in these words—do this in remembrance of me—which were used by Christ the same night in which he

same thing is affirmed also by prelatical writers.[1] But what is of more importance, it is, we apprehend, expressly declared by the apostle, who says that it was 'when he, (that is, Christ,) had ascended on high, he gave some to be apostles, by fully endowing them for their office. Eph. 4: 11. The apostles, however, were previously employed, together with the seventy, in a temporary and ordinary ministry, and went about the country of Judea, proclaiming the approaching establishment of the christian dispensation. It has also been shown, by Lord Barrington, in a very extensive examination of the scripture history, that after his conversion Paul labored in the character of a prophet or teacher for eight or nine years before he was called to be an apostle. During this time he was not recognised by the brethren, or the other apostles, as an apostle, nor even as a disciple: (Acts 9: 26;) neither did he preach to the heathen, but confined his labors to the Jews, and to the proselytes of the gate. And it was only about the year 43, that, in a revelation of Christ, made to him in the temple at Jerusalem, during his second visit, he received his commission to go as an apostle to the Gentiles, and those supernatural endowments he afterwards displayed. Then only was he called an apostle. Acts 13: 9. Then, for the first time, was he ordained and publicly recognised by the special appointment of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 13: 1, &c.) and then only did he commence his inspired writings.[2] This is the opinion of Hooker and of Dr. Hales.[3] And it is remarkable that while prophets are said to exhort, evangelists to preach, and others to teach, that the apostles alone are said to witness or testify.[4]

In the third place we remark, that the denial of this distinction, or the supposition, that without it the apostles are succeeded in their ministry, leads to many absurdities. If the apostles, as they were superior to, and distinguished from, presbyters, are to be ranked as an order of the christian ministry, having peculiar successors in the line of prelates, then is the whole theory of ministerial orders thrown into fathomless confusion. According to archbishop Potter, 'besides them there were at least two orders of fixed and stand-

was betrayed, Christ did not ordain his apostles priests — let him be accursed.' 1. Concil. Trid. Sess. 22. conc. 2.

1) See Burnet on the Thirty-Nine Art. p. 453. Page's ed. Faber's Diff. of Romanism, B. 2, ch. ii. p. 261.

2) See Lord Barrington's Theol. Wks. vol. ii. Essay iii. p. 181 — 264, 194.

3) Hooker, Eccl. Pol. B. vii. § 4. Hale's Analysis of Chron. vol. ii. pt. ii. p. 1083, and Townsend's N. T. vol. ii. p. 160.

4) Acts 11: 23, and 15: 22; ibid. 8, 5; 12, 35; 21, 8, 18, 25; 13, 1; 9, 20, 22, 29; 11, 26; 22, 18.

ing ministers, namely, bishops and presbyters, with another of deacons.'[1] We have thus three orders besides the apostles, making in all four, and that, too, besides the order constituted by Christ, as the prototype of a prelatical hierarchy. But even this comes short of the beautiful gradations of the hierarchy, as drawn forth by the authoritative pencil of the admired and skilful Saravia. 'There is no question,' he tells us, 'but that the apostles held the first rank, evangelists the second, prophets the third, pastors and presbyters the fourth, teachers the last.'[2] Here, then, are five standing orders, besides Christ, and deacons, which make the number seven. But then, 'pastors and presbyters,' he adds, 'were distinguished by the apostles into two orders,'[3] which swells the number to eight. And this number, on the same principles of interpretation, might easily be multiplied to as many more, so that the ranks of the celestial hierarchy, in their shining orders of cherubim and seraphim, may hide their diminished heads before the innumerous trains of ministering spirits who crowd the gates of the earthly sanctuary.

In the fourth place we remark, that the apostles themselves seem carefully to distinguish between their authoritative character, as inspired apostles, and their ordinary character, as weak and fallible ministers of the word. Paul shall be our witness. In one place he says, 'I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.' So that, independently of the high privilege which he had as an apostle, he had to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, as a christian minister. Thus, also, he says, 'in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.' It is thus that he always distinguishes between himself and his apostleship.[4] Thus, to take another illustration. In his inscription to the Epistle to the Romans, (ch. 1 : 1,) he describes himself as 'Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle.' Here we have his apostolical character, as derived from Jesus Christ, by an immediate call. The apostle adds, 'separated to the gospel of God,' wherein he refers to his being set apart for the work of the gospel by the presbyters of Antioch, as is admitted by Dr. Bloomfield, a staunch prelatist,[5] and as would appear from the use of the identical term employed in the account of that transaction.

1) Church Gov. p. 107, Am. ed.
2) On the Priesthood, pp. 57, 58. See also pp. 65, 67.
3) Ibid.
4) See Jordan's (of Oxford) Review of Tradition. Lond. 1840. p. 78.
5) See Crit. Digest, in loco, also Parkhurst in loco, and Bretschneider.

And thus also in the epistle to the Ephesians, among whom there had been placed presbyters or bishops, as fixed officers, it is declared that Christ 'gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, and some to be pastors and teachers,' (Eph. 4: 11, 12.) The extraordinary gifts and offices necessary to plant the church, are here first expressed, and their design alleged to have been *προς τον καταρτισμον*, 'to prepare the saints,' *εις εργον διακονιας*, that is, 'for the duties of the fixed and permanent church, state, and ministry.' And that this is the meaning of the apostle, is evident, from what he adds, *εις οικοδομην του σωματος του χριστου*, 'in order that the church of Christ, (his body,) might be established, fixed, and settled;' *μεχρι*, &c., that is, these extraordinary gifts and offices continued to be necessary until the church had been established in this uniform, settled, and perfect form, under the ministry of its one, only, and simple order of 'pastors and teachers.'[1]

'It is to be observed,' says Ayton,[2] 'that the work of the ministry is here placed in the middle, between the two ends proposed, perfecting the saints, and edifying the body of Christ; thereby to point forth, that it was a mean, equally concerned in both these, and that it was by the continuance and faithful discharge thereof they were to be promoted. Now, the work of the ministry, being all that was to be continued till the end of time, makes it evident, that the extraordinary character of the apostles, prophets, and evangelists was to cease with themselves, and that nothing they were vested with was to remain, but what they made the investiture of, to pastors and teachers, which was the work of the ministry. They having acted the part that was laid upon them, by virtue of their respective missions, and extraordinary characters, in bringing in and making up the New-Testament state of the church, till its canon was completed, with a view to the perfecting of the saints, and edifying the body of Christ by the work of the ministry, which they labored in during their lives. All that was needful, was, to leave the churches planted with such officers as were to continue to the world's end; and from time to time to be set apart for the ministerial work, that the end proposed might be duly accomplished. And so, pastors and teachers are the office-bearers immediately joined to the ministerial work, to be continued in the church; and there is next to a full stop between them and

1) See Hoogeven p. 97, and Dr. Wilson on the Primitive Government of the Churches, pp. 277, 278. See also this view confirmed in Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 98, ch. ix. See also Bloomfield's Crit. Digest, in loco.

2) Orig. Constit. of the Ch. p. 48.

evangelists, in the original copies, at least, in those which are before me.'

Thus also in 2 Cor. 11 : 23, the apostle, in justification of his character as compared with the false teachers, asks, 'are they ministers of Christ?' He thus allows that they were reputed ministers of Christ, but that in this respect also he could show his superiority. And how? Does he assert that while they were only ministers he was an apostle? No, but he shows that, even in his ordinary character as a minister, he was on many accounts superior, as he goes on to enumerate. So also in 1 Tim. 2 : 7, he says, 'whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle,' thus distinguishing between himself, in his ordinary character as a preacher, and in his extraordinary character as an apostle. (See also 1 Tim. 1 : 12; 2 Tim. 1 : 11.

'It seemed,' says Milton, 'so far from the apostles[1] to think much of as if hereby their dignity were impaired, that, as we may gather by those epistles of Peter and John, which are likely to be latest written, when the church grew to a settling like those heroic patricians of Rome, (if we may use such comparison,) hastening to lay down their dictatorship, they rejoiced to call themselves and to be as fellow-elders among their brethren; knowing that their high office was but as the scaffolding of the church yet unbuilt, and would be but a troublesome disfigurement, so soon as the building was finished. But the lofty minds of an age or two after, such was their small discerning, thought it a poor indignity, that the high-reared government of the church should so on a sudden, as it seemed to them, squat into a presbytery.'

A fifth reason for this distinction, will be found in the usage of the early church. That it was universally recognised by the apostolic, primitive, and early churches, would appear from the acknowledged fact, that while they claimed a ministerial succession, they nevertheless entirely abstained from the use of the title 'apostle,' as designative of any existing ministers in the church. The strong presumption undoubtedly is, that this was done, not as was afterwards affirmed, when the prelatic theory had to be sustained, *through modesty*, but on the much better ground, that they believed the peculiar office and functions of the apostles to have ceased with the persons of the apostles themselves.[2]

We add, as a sixth reason for this distinction, the testi-

1) Milton's Wks. vol. i. pp. 106, 107. 2) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. x. p. 237, &c.

mony of our opponents themselves. Bishops Bilson and Pearson,[1] Honnieman, Hale, with Dr. Hammond, and others, will be found unequivocally to distinguish that ordinary power in which the apostles are succeeded, from that extraordinary character in which they had no successors.[2] The[3] language of bishop Andrews is very strong.[4] 'In the apostles (that we may come nearer yet) we find three capacities, as we may term them; first, as christians in general; second, as preachers, priests, or ministers more special; third, as those twelve persons, whom in strict propriety of speech we term the apostles.' And after showing that the commission was not given to them personally, he adds: 'It being then neither personal nor peculiar to them as apostles, nor again common to all as christians, it must needs be committed to them as ministers, priests, or preachers; and consequently to these that in that office and function do succeed them, to whom this commission is still continued. Neither are they that are ordained or instituted to that calling, ordained or instituted by any other words or verse than this, John 20:23.'

The apostles, therefore, are to be considered as both extraordinary and ordinary, both as apostles and as ministers of Christ. As apostles they were never ordained, but called by the immediate voice of Christ,[5] while, as a minister, Paul, at least, was certainly set apart by the imposition of the hands of his brethren. As apostles too they could not delegate their office or its power.[6] Neither could they appoint a successor to themselves, *as apostles*, and therefore Matthias and Paul were both consecrated to their office by an express revelation from heaven, and in fulfilment of prophecy.[7] Nor will the extraordinary authority exercised by the apostles over other

1) On the Creed, Art. i, p. 16.

2) Bilson on Govt. of the Ch. ch. ix. p. 105. Honnieman's Survey of Naphtali, Part ii. pp. 191, 195, 196. Hall's Episc. by Divine Right, Part ii. § 3, and Henderson's Review and Consideration, p. 286. See also Hinds's Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. i. p. 149. Jeremy Taylor is very strong; 'in the extraordinary privileges of the apostles, they had no successors; therefore, of necessity, a successor must be constituted in the ordinary office of the apostolate.' Episc. asserted in Works, vol. vii.

3) See 2 Tim. 4:9, and 5:13, 21; Titus 3:12, and Henderson's Review and Considn. Edinb. 1706, pp. 216, 219.

4) Serm. on Absol'n Fol. p. 59. Lond. 1635.

5) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 264. Beveridge's Works, vol. ii. pp. 112, 115. Selden thinks Paul was ordained a scribe in the synagogue, and that he bore the same rank and character when a christian. Rev. G. Townsend in Lord Barrington's Works, vol. ii. p. 159, Note.

6) See Dr. Wilson, Primit. Govt. of the Ch. p. 11. See also Whitaker on, in Henderson's Review and Considn, pp. 306, 307.

7) It may, however, be doubted whether Matthias was really constituted an apostle of his election, it has been said. Now that was an official act, or it was not. If official, it was premature. The apostles were commanded to wait till they received the promise of the Father — till they were

ministers, afford any sanction whatever, to the idea of prelatists, that such authority was to remain permanently in a succession of persons constituting an apostolic order;[1] and we are hence to conclude, that it was only in their ordinary ministerial character the apostles either could be, or are, in fact, succeeded.[2] 'Successors in the apostolic office, the apostles have none. As *witnesses* of the *resurrection;* as *dispensers* of *miraculous* gifts; as inspired *oracles* of divine *revelation;* they have no successors. But as *members*, as *ministers*, as *governors*, of christian communities, their successors are the regularly admitted members, the lawfully ordained ministers, the regular and recognised governors of a regularly subsisting christian church:'—so speaks archbishop Whateley.[3]

## § 7. *As ordinary ministers, the apostles were presbyters, and are succeeded by presbyters.*

In their ordinary office or character, the apostles were bishops, pastors, or presbyters; in short, ministers or preachers of the gospel. This ordinary office was included in their apostleship, which consisted in all those superadded powers and qualifications, which fitted them to establish and organize the christian church. These names signify the same office, considered in different aspects. The term ἐπισκοπος or bishop, is, in the Greek language, equivalent to overseer or superintendent, and refers to the *office* or *duty* of the minister. It is perfectly synonymous with the term pastor or shepherd, so commonly employed in the Old Testament, to denote the prophets and doctors, and translated by the term bishop in the Septuagint version. Episcopus was the common and known title of the public minister of the synagogue, called also 'the angel of the church;' 'the chazan or bishop of the

endued with power from on high. Till thus enriched and endowed, they were not competent to enter on any department of their work; and consequently, not authorized to enter on any such proceeding as the election of a fellow apostle. But if it be admitted that it was not an official act, the whole transaction goes for nothing. Besides, was not this election wholly set aside by Christ himself, when he chose Paul to bear his name far hence to the Gentiles? Never did he commit to them such power. It was indispensable to the very existence as well as possession of the office, that the commission should be held immediately from Christ. This was the case with Paul, but not with Matthias. Nor is it a little remarkable, that the latter is never once introduced in any way, either in the evangelical history, or in the epistles, from the day of his election to the extinction of the whole college of apostles.' Puseyism, or the Errors of the Times, by Rev. Robert Ferguson, Lond. See also Hamilton's Essay on Missions, p. 144, and full on in Duffield, on Episcopacy, Letter vii.

1) See the reasoning in Bloomfield's Gr. Test. on Matt. 16: 19.

2) See Corbet on the Ch. p. 36.

3) Archbishop Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. p. 43, § 240.

congregation,' who presided in their assemblies, and carefully corrected those who read the word of God, whence he was denominated episcopus, or overseer.[1] The word presbyter, in Greek, is the same as *senior*, or *natu major*, in Latin, and elder, in English, and refers to the qualifications and dignity of the office.[2] The term presbyter denotes, therefore, the authority and high dignity of the ministry, and the term bishop, the functions growing out of it; while both were familiar to the Jews, as indifferently applicable to the same office, both in the Septuagint and in the synagogue.[3] Even as late as the time of Clement, the term bishop is always the same with presbyter, or elder, as every one may see who will read his epistle.[4] The propriety of these two names of designation for the same office, will appear, if we consider that the one is of Jewish and the other of Greek original, and that the early churches were composed of converts both from among the Jews and the Greeks.

Now, we find the apostles, in their ordinary character, identified with both these terms. 'Even the dignity of the apostleship,' says Mr. Sinclair, 'is occasionally termed an episcopal office.' Acts, 1 : 20.[5] But the term bishop is, undoubtedly, a denomination given by the Holy Spirit to presbyters, (Acts, 20 : 28,) and since it is employed to denote the apostleship in its general or ministerial character,[6] the office of the apostleship, and of the presbyterate, are properly denominated by the same terms, and imply the same ministerial character and work. In fact, in this and other passages, the apostleship is, in this general view of it, called a ministry.[7] Christ, therefore, enjoined his apostles, to 'feed his sheep.'

1) Lightfoot, Wks. vol. ii. p. 88, and vol. iii. p. 257. On the use of the term bishop, see Burnet's obs. on the 1st Canon, pp. 3, 4; see also Binii Concil, Tom. 6, 241, col. i.

2) Officers under this name had existed among the Jews even during their captivity in Egypt.* Others were appointed in the wilderness.†

3) See Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 47; and Sinclair's Vind. of the Apost. Succ. p. 15; Lond. 1839: and Dr. Rice's Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 571; and Saravia, as above.

4) Lord Barrington's Theol. Wks. vol. ii. p. 158. That the term presbyter is generic, and is applicable to the christian ministry in general, and to all who were at first employed in this work, however variously distinguished, Hadrian Saravia constantly affirms. On p. 93, he applies it to apostles, evangelists, and prophets. So again p. 107.

5) The passage is a quotation from the Old Testament, (Ps. 69 : 25, and Is. 60 : 17,) in which it is foretold, according to the Greek version, that the ordinary ministers of the gospel-church should be called bishops. 'I will also make thy officers (επισκοπους) peace.' This passage we shall find quoted by Clement, in support of this opinion.

6) Ibid.

7) Acts 1 : 25. See also 1 Cor. 4 : 1; 2 Cor. 3 : 6, and 11 : 23; Eph. 3 : 6, 7; Col. 1 : 23, 25. See Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 17.

* Exod. 3 : 11, 16, and 5 : 18.

† Exod. 18 : 13, 27, and Lord Barrington's Essay on the Elders, Wks. vol. ii. part ii. p. 140, &c.

He instructed them that there was to be among them no Rabbi, but that all ministers are brethren: Matthew, 23: 8. The apostles desire us 'so to account of them,' not as masters of the church, or fathers in God, but 'as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God,' whose business it is to dispense the gospel. 1 Cor. 4: 1. 'Who then,' asks Paul, 'is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers of Christ, by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?' 1 Cor. 3: 5, &c. Peter and Paul call themselves fellow-elders, fellow-servants, and fellow-soldiers with other ministers of Christ. Thus Epaphras, the Colossian presbyter, is called by Paul, his fellow-servant, (Col. 1: 7,) and so, also, are Tychichus, (1 Peter, 5: 1,) and Epaphroditus, and Clement, (Phil. 2: 25, and 4: 3,) and this too at a time when it is admitted prelates were not established in these churches.[1] Paul also addresses Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Lucas, as his fellow-laborers. (Philem. 24.) The original word here, may be rendered fellow-officers, (*συνεργοι*, from *εργον*, which signifies an office, Acts, 13: 4. 1 Tim. 3: 1.) or persons sustaining the same office. And this word is here applied to these particular persons, in their distinctive character, and therefore, in that appropriate sense in which it designates the ministerial office: (see 2 Cor. 8: 23; Col. 4: 11.) It is allowed, even by Mr. Perceval, that the apostles 'are frequently styled presbyters.'[2] This they called themselves, says Mr. Benson, 'accounting it an honor and a dignity even to them,' and 'glorying in it.'[3] The term apostle, therefore, as applied to denote the standing office of the ministry, is used interchangeably with the terms presbyter and bishop, and means the same thing: at least, if the apostle Peter may be allowed to decide this question; for he says expressly, (1 Peter, 5: 1,) 'the presbyters who are among you I exhort, who am also a presbyter;'[4] or if the apostle John is competent to judge upon the scriptural meaning and design of the terms and of the office, since he designates himself a presbyter, in both his epistles; (2 John, 1, and 3 John, 1,) or if the apostle Paul is any authority, who calls himself, 'Paul the aged,' that is, *πρεσβυτης*, the very word and meaning from which is derived the term *πρεσβυτερος*. (Philem. 9.)

The apostles, when they had once settled any church, and

1) See Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 110.

2) On the Apost. Succ. p. 19. See also Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 107; and Dr. Bowden, in Wks. on Episcop. vol. ii. p. 147.

3) Benson on the Relig. Worship of the Christians, ch. iii. § 2, p. 84.

4) See Nolan's Catholic Char. of Christ'y, p. 124, who says this passage is 'heterodox to our episcopalian ears.'

remained in it for any time, governed it in union with the pastors or presbyters, and acted conjointly with them as fellow-elders, that is, as *primi inter pares*.[1] They disavowed all lordship over them. They claimed, personally, no right of interference or control; no power of a negative or veto upon their decisions. Such authority was exercised by them only under the guidance of inspiration, and so far as it was called for in the discharge of their extraordinary office. Thus do we find the apostles acting as presbyters in the church of Jerusalem. (Acts 10: 44, 47; Acts 15: 6, 22, and 21, 17, 18; also chap. 6.) For those officers, of whom there might be more than one in one single church, were not, prelatists themselves being judges, prelates. But the apostles did many of them continue to labor together as one body in this church, as they did also elsewhere, and therefore the apostles, apart from their extraordinary office, were not prelates, but presbyters. And as this was the first christian church, constituted by our Lord himself, it certainly affords the best model for all others, and the surest proof of the true character of the designed ministry of the church.[2] Thus, also, as archbishop Wake testifies, in the thirteenth chapter of Acts, the apostles Paul and Barnabas are numbered among the prophets and teachers of the christian church at Antioch. Here we find them, both by teaching and administering the blessed sacrament, discharging the work of a priest or presbyter, as we now understand that word.'[3] And hence the term pastor is equally applicable to apostles and to presbyters.[4] (Acts, ch. 15 and 21.) The apostles were, therefore, as Mr. Thorndike admits, no other than heads of presbyteries.[5] Thus, also, as bishop Stillingfleet thinks, the term angel, in the epistles to the seven churches, is to be understood, 'of the concessus, or order of presbyters in that church.'[6] And thus, also, the ministers spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and who, as there were several of them in each church, were presbyters, are called rulers, (13: 17,) and as such are to be obeyed. These words are actually translated by Chillingworth, 'obey your prelates,'[7] where presbyters are unquestionably identified as the acknowledged successors of the apostles. 'The presbyters,'

1) Benson on Relig. Worship of the Christians, ch. iii. See Churchman's Monthly Review, June, 1841, p. 313. See this point fully established in Bastwick's Utter Routing of the whole Army of the Independents and Sectaries, Lond. 1646, 4to. p. 426, &c.

2) See Peirce's Def. of Presb. Ord. Lond. 1717, p. 10.

3) Apostol. Fathers, Prel. Disc. to Ep. of Barnabas, § 5, p. 271.

4) Bishop Blomfield's Lect. on the Acts. Lond. 1829, p. 110.

5) Thorndike on Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 43, 44.

6) Irenicum, p. 336.

7) Wks. vol. i. p. 369.

as archbishop Potter allows, 'are all along mentioned as copartners with James in the care of the church of Jerusalem.'[1] The church of Christ is also expressly declared to rest on the apostles first, and then on the presbyters as their successors, thus making presbyters (as the prophets are admitted to have been) 'the fellows and copartners of the apostles in the foundation of the christian church.'[2] The presbyters of the church of Jerusalem, acted for and presided in the absence of the apostles;[3] and in the synodical letter sent to the churches by the council at Jerusalem, presbyters are named next to the apostles, and are therefore of the next rank to them.[4] The controversy submitted to the decision of that council, was referred expressly to 'the apostles and presbyters,'[5] because, as a very competent judge decides, 'they used to preside in the absence of the apostles.'[6] The presbyters of all the christian churches, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 'are said to have the oversight of these churches, (επισκοπειν,) that is, they were bishops of those churches, and are spoken of as governors.'[7]

In fine, it is sufficient to corroborate fully our conclusion, that, in their ordinary character, the apostles were identified with presbyters, and known and spoken of familiarly as such, to adduce the testimony of the earliest age. Thus Clemens Romanus tells us, that the apostles knew 'that there should contentions arise upon account of the name of episcopacy, and therefore, having perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave direction how, when they should die, other, chosen and approved men, should succeed to their ministry.'[8]

A similar testimony is preserved in a fragment of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, A. D. 116, the hearer of John and the companion of Polycarp. 'I shall not think it grievous,' he says, 'to set down in writing, with my interpretations, the things which I have learned of the presbyters. If I met any where with any one who had conversed with the presbyters, I inquired after the sayings of the presbyters, what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas, what James had said;

1) On Ch. Govt. p. 102.

2) Potter, ibid. pp. 103, 92, 101, 102. See also pp. 105, 106.

3) Gal. 2 : 10. Rom. 15 : 25, 31.

4) Acts, 15 : 23, and Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 143.

5) Acts, 15 : 2.

6) Ibid, pp. 175 and 170.

7) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 105 and again p. 106. Bishop Pearson also distinctly affirms, that their successors 'succeeded the apostles in their ordinary functions, but were not to come near them in their extraordinary gifts.'*

8) 1st Ep. ad Cor. § 44.

* On the Creed, Art. 1. p. 16.

what John or Matthew, or any other disciple of the Lord were wont to say, and what Ariston, or John the presbyter, said.'[1] It is also admitted, by Dr. Hammond, that the word presbyter is used for bishop, and interchangeably with it by Polycarp, Papias, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Clemens Alexandrinus.[2] Neither can any other rational account be given of the practice of the ancients in speaking of the apostles as bishops, Peter having been, as they say, bishop of Antioch and of Rome, James of Jerusalem, and so of the other extraordinary coadjutors of the apostles, Mark, Timothy, and Titus. These were accustomed to act as presidents of the christian congregations during their visits to them, this office being at other times filled by one of the stated bishops or presbyters. And as, in the second century, the name bishop came to signify this president, by way of distinction from the others, the apostles were then familiarly spoken of in the same way. Hence, were the names of those who presided in the churches, and acted as their moderators, recorded as the successors of the apostles in their ordinary ministerial character.[3]

The apostles, therefore, as ordinary officers, and the prototypes of the permanent ministers of the church, being thus identified with presbyters, in their ecclesiastical functions, we are led to conclude, that, when they ordained others to succeed them in the work of the ministry, it was, of course, in those ordinary functions, and not in their extraordinary endowments or authority. It is true, many of these presbyters and evangelists, received from the hands of the apostles some special gifts and powers, but these gifts were determined at their decease. They were personal, and not transferable — individual, and not hereditary — additional to their official character, and not intrinsically a part of it. Let any who may deny these premises, on their own behalf, show us the signs of an apostle.[4]

Now if we separate from the apostolic character what was extraordinary and special, we must take away the gift of tongues — the gift of inspiration — the authority to decide all controversies by the spirit of wisdom that was in them — and the right to exercise their office equally in all churches, over

1) See cited in Eusebius's Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 39. Thus also we find, that while certain writings were by many fathers recognised as those of apostles, they were not received into the canonical Scriptures, because not regarded as dictated by inspiration. See archbishop Wake's Apost. Fathers, Prel. Disc. to the Ep. of Barnabas, § 23, p. 281. English edition.

2) Dissert. 3, c. 22, in Baxter on Episc. p. 99.

3) Benson's Essay on the Relig. Worship of the Christ. chap. iii. § 6.

4) See Lectures on Apost. Succ. Lect. x.

all ministers, and in all parts of the world. But what functions are left to characterise the apostles, as ordinary ministers, when these are withdrawn? We answer, the offices of teaching and governing. In these offices, there is implied the oversight of all the flock — preaching to them — baptizing all that are to be baptized — the administration of the Lord's supper to all who are meet partakers — blessing the congregation — public and private admonition — excommunication of the obdurate — and the restoration of the penitent to the privileges of the church.[1] These, then, are the functions by which the apostles were characterized as ordinary ministers.

It follows, therefore, as a clear inference, that to whomsoever Christ has authorized the commitment of his keys in the office of teaching and ruling — they are the successors of the apostles, in whatever character those heavenly teachers could be succeeded. And our object will be to show that these powers are vested by scripture, in presbyters, who are therefore the successors of the apostles.[2]

1) And Saravia shows that these all belong to pastors or presbyters, as much as to the apostles, in their ordinary or general character. On the Priesthood, p. 113. This much Hooker himself acknowledges.* 'In some things every presbyter, in some things only bishops, in some things neither the one nor the other are the apostle's successors.'

And again† he admits, that, under the apostolic regimen and ministry, the government of the churches was committed to presbyters. 'That where colleges of presbyters were, there was at the first equality amongst them, St. Jerome thinketh it a matter clear; but when the rest were thus equal, so that no one of them could command any other as inferior unto him, they all were controllable by the apostles, who had that episcopal authority abiding at the first in themselves, which they afterwards derived unto others.' 'The whole power of the ministry was lodged‡ with the apostles; this plenitude of clerical power was communicated to the bishops, or presbyters. This plenitude of power made the bishops, or presbyters, equal with the apostles in their ordinary permanent authority.'

* Eccl. Pol. B. vii. § 4, vol. iii. p. 187. Keble's edit.

† B. vii. § 5, p. 190, do.

‡ Wks. on Episcop. vol. ii. p. 131.

2) In confirmation of these views we adduce the language of Dr. Rice. 'Now it admits of a question, whether the *apostle-presbyters*, were a different *order* from the *bishop-presbyters*. It is our opinion, that they were not. We do not find any thing in the use of the words, or in the claims of the apostles, to warrant the contrary opinion. We have before remarked, that *apostle* signifies *messenger*. This term was applied to the *inspired* teachers, because they were *sent* out *immediately* by Jesus Christ, to perform a particular service, and furnished with particular powers, of an extraordinary character. In this respect, they differed from all other *presbyters*. Still, however, they held the same *rank* with other teachers of christianity. Our views of this subject may be illustrated. It was once proposed, at an extraordinary period in the history of our country, to make general Washington *dictator*. Let us suppose, that, on the organization of the government of the United States, *that* suggestion had been adopted. He would have then been *president* with all the powers conferred by the constitution, and *dictator* with the extraordinary powers conferred for a special object by the sovereign people. When this object is accomplished, these powers cease. No similar powers are conferred on any of his successors. They are elected under the

## § 8. *The succession of presbyters is the only ministerial succession that can be certainly proved.*

But before proceeding to a more careful inquiry into this subject, there is one argument by which the vast superiority of the claim of presbyters, to this apostolical succession, may be triumphantly shown, and which may form a suitable conclusion to the present branch of our investigation.

That we have a ministerial succession from the apostles cannot possibly be questioned. It is not denied by any, that there ever has been, since that time, a church on earth, in which our progenitors were found enrolled, and that in this church there was a constant ministry. The whole question, therefore, reduces itself to this. Supposing such a ministerial succession to have existed regularly until the period of the reformation, can it, or can it not, be continued by presbyters without the concurrence of prelates? That our succession, down to the period of the reformation, is as good as that of the prelates, they must admit, because we may identify it with their own; and that it is better, we contend, because we may trace it up through the purer channels of the Waldenses and the Culdees, and thus claim a succession, not only *in the ministry*, but, what is of infinitely more importance, *in the doctrine*, of the apostles. But it will be said, that our succession, since the reformation, being merely in

constitution, and exercise only the authority with which, by that sacred instrument, they are invested. Now, the question is, did *president* Washington, in the case supposed, hold a higher *rank* than presidents Jefferson, Adams, Madison, &c.? We say, no. And just so we think it was in the church of Christ. The *apostle-presbyters* such as Peter, Paul, John, and others, were of the same rank or order with other presbyters; but were sent with extraordinary powers, on an extraordinary occasion. The decisive evidence of their possessing these powers, was their *immediate mission* by the sovereign of the church, with gifts to qualify them fully for their extraordinary work. No man could sustain a claim to such a mission, unless he was able to show that Christ had furnished him for the work. Here is the sufficient limitation and guard. The *bishop-presbyters* came after the apostles, without their extraordinary gifts. These were unnecessary; because the whole work of revelation was completed; and the great office of the religious teachers was, to assist their fellow-men in understanding that system of religion, which had been given by the God of mercy to all.*

'The apostles had the general superintendence of all the churches, and were *co-presbyters* in each particular church.' Gieseler's Text B. of Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 59.

Apostoli vere erant presbyteri; atque ita seipsos vocant. Nulli tamen loco, ascripta eorum functio. Evangelistæ quoque presbyteri erant, sed nulli loco colligate. Grotius de Imper. p. 271. Baxter in his Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 21, &c., offers many reasons for the opinion, that the apostles are succeeded in their general office.

* Dr. Rice, in Evang. Mag. vol. x. pp. 571, 572. See also Jamieson's Sum. of the Episcop. Controv. pp. 7, 24.

the line of presbyters, is null and void, and of no value whatever. To this we reply, that there is sufficient evidence for an uninterrupted succession of presbyters, from the days of the apostles to the present time — that, on the other hand, there is no such evidence for a lineal succession of prelates, and that, if the power of continuing the succession, through presbyters, is denied, no ministerial succession whatever can be substantiated.[1]

And first, we say there is sufficient evidence for an uninterrupted succession of faithful presbyters in the church. Let it be remembered, that all prelates are confessedly presbyters. The presbyterate has always been deemed an essential prerequisite to the episcopate, since no man could be validly consecrated a prelate who had not been first validly ordained a presbyter. Bellarmine himself declares, that the prelacy of such an one is a mere figment, and an empty title. A constant succession of validly ordained presbyters is therefore involved in the theory of a succession of prelates, and must be granted by the defenders of that hypothesis. By affirming, that there has been an unbroken line of prelates, they must of course allow, that there has been an unbroken line of presbyters, of whose apostolical origin there can be no question. And thus, no doubt can attach to the claim of an uninterrupted succession of presbyters, from the days of the apostles until the present time. This fact is not disputed, either by romanist, prelatist, or presbyterian. All the fathers, and all branches of the church, with very few exceptions, acknowledge the divine institution of the presbyterate as an order of the christian ministry, and that it has continued, in some good measure, and in some valid form, in the christian church. A number of presbyters were, in the beginning, appointed in the same church not only for the arduous work of instruction, but because of persecution, on which account, had only one presbyter been fixed in each church, the continuance of the ministry by succession would have been precarious. As it was, however, the ministerial succession was rendered certain.[2]

But what is more; presbyters have been regarded as the same with bishops in respect to order and original inherent power and divine right, by many if not most of the early fathers, by the schoolmen, by the greatest divines in all ages,

1) This argument will be found to have occurred to, and to be admitted by, archbishop Whateley, in his Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 30, pp. 187, 188, and § 32, p. 200, Eng. ed.

2) Dr. Wilson's Primit. Govt. of the Ch. p. 281. This is also fully admitted by Dr. Vaughan, the learned advocate of Congregationalism, in his recent work, 'Congregationalism.' Lond. 1842, pp. 205, 206.

and by almost all the churches in the world.[1] It admits, says Dr. Nolan, of no question, that presbyters are said to exercise the episcopate.[2] There is, in truth, as even prelatists acknowledge,[3] and as Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom teach, but one ultimate, essential, and originating order of the ministry.[4] That such was the judgment of the ancient and universal church is made manifest from the fact, that, in order to any valid ordination, the concurrence of presbyters with prelates has always been made necessary, in the imposition of hands.[5] Hence we find, that in earlier ages bishops acted only with the advice of their clergy, and in later times with that of their chapter.[6] And even now, we are informed, that not a few of the English bishops seem desirous to revert, as far as practicable, to the primitive character of *primus inter pares*, and, by manifesting fraternal sympathy with the presbytery, to disarm the envy attendant upon the episcopate.[7] We must, therefore, conclude that presbyters were believed to possess the same original inherent powers with prelates, and to be of the same order, or otherwise that the church in every age and country, in the most solemn rite of ordination, was guilty of perpetrating by rule a profane and inexcusable mockery; and that such was the established opinion—presbyters and prelates being regarded as differing in consequence of ecclesiastical law and not by virtue of any divine right—many have been found willing to testify in every age.[8] But even if this were not the case, and had it even been the opinion, that prelates were superior to presbyters, our conclu-

1) See, on this subject, Dr. Elliott on Romanism, vol. i. pp. 451, 453, 457, 458, and 468, 478, &c.

2) Catholic Character of Christ. p. 220. Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 115. Eng. Ed. Stillingfl. Iren. p. 286. King's Primit. Ch. p. 79. Burnet's Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. pp. 165, 177, 181. Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 86, 87. Baxter on Episc. pp. 68, where he quotes Petavius. Bellarmine confesses the same thing. See in Willet's Synopsis Papismi, p. 270.

3) See Palmer's Treatise on the Church. 'I maintain, says Saravia, that there is one order of all bishops and presbyters.' Def. p. 286. See authorities in Lect.

4) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 88. Even in Cyprian, sacerdos or priest usually signifies a bishop, and sacerdotium or priesthood the episcopal office. Wks. by Marshall, Ep. lxv. p. 102. Ep. lxvii. p. 202. Ep. lxxi. p. 227. Ep. lxxii. p. 228. See also testimonies to this effect by Hammond, in Baxter on Episc. pp. 99 and 68.

5) See Divine Right of the Ministry, pt. ii. pp. 129, 130. Forbesius's Iren. lib. ii. cap. 11. Council of Carthage, Canons 2 and 20.

6) See Neal's Hist. vol. iv. pp. 252, 255, 262, 265. Dr. Hook's Call to Union, p. 24. Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 51, 52. See authorities in B. ii. and in Whitby on 1 Tim. 4: 14.

7) Churchman's Monthly Review, July, 1841, p. 367, and again 370.

8) See Div. Right of the Min. ch. vi. pt. ii. pp. 127–141, also the concessions of the leading defenders of prelacy, in Baxter on Episcop. ch. v. See also Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 286, who fully proves this point.

sion is the same. For it is undeniable, that cases have occurred in which presbyters have assisted prelates even in the consecration of prelates.[1] This practice has been notoriously followed under the infallible sanction of Rome herself,[2] and upon its validity depends that of both the Romish and the Anglican successions. Presbyters, therefore, are capable of conferring all the ordination which is necessary to constitute prelates, just as kings, magistrates, and civil functionaries are appointed to office by their subjects or inferiors. But if presbyters have the power of conferring official standing on prelates when they enter on their higher office, how much more certainly have they the power of appointing presbyters to their office with like powers as themselves, and thus of perpetuating the ministerial order, to the end of time, without regard to prelates.[3] It is thus made absolutely certain, that the order of presbyters is a divinely instituted order of christian ministers, and that their succession from the apostles' times until the present hour, has never been interrupted nor at any time entirely wanting, and also that these presbyters are competent to perpetuate their own order. On the other hand there is no such evidence for an uninterrupted succession of prelates. The very existence of any such order, by divine appointment, as essential to the perpetuation of the ministry, is denied by the whole of protestant christendom, with almost entire unanimity. Neither can it ever be proved that such an order was instituted by the apostles, or that it existed in their day, or that prelates succeeded to their office and authority. The allegation, that there has been in fact an unbroken lineal succession of validly ordained and qualified prelates, is contradicted by the discordant lists that are made out, by history, by facts, and by reason; and never can be sustained by any possible proof. All this we have already established, and all this is now admitted by many.[4]

And what, then, is the conclusion? The conclusion is, that if the power of continuing the ministerial succession by presbyters is denied, then no ministerial succession whatever can be substantiated. And as it is now granted by Mr. Palmer, and has been shown by bishop Taylor, and others,

1) See the case fully argued in Faber's Albigenses, Appendix.

2) See Palmer's Vind. of Episc. against Dr. Wiseman.

3) See Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 38, pp. 222, 223.

4) This has been fully admitted by archbishop Whateley in his Kingdom of Christ. The same impossibility has also been admitted by Dr. Hawkins on the Apost. Succ. published by command of the archbishop of Canterbury. Lond. 1842, pp. 9, 10, also by Dr. Nolan in his Catholic Char. of Christianity. Lond. 1839, Letter ii. &c.

that there is but one original and essential order of the ministry, it follows, also, either that presbyters are no order of the christian ministry, nor of divine appointment; or that prelates are neither. But that presbyters are such an order, and by divine institution, we have shown; and, therefore, prelates cannot be a divinely appointed order. On prelatical grounds, then, there can be no succession whatever, while, on presbyterian principles, a ministerial succession is undoubted. Again, on the prelatical theory, no unbroken or regular succession can be made out. This theory asserts, that there has been a lineal, personal succession of validly consecrated prelates, without which there can be now no valid or proper ministerial succession at all. Now, in order to establish this theory, a lineal and unbroken personal succession of validly consecrated prelates must be made out, as it regards every link in the whole chain, for, as the validity of any present orders, ordinances, and ministry, can only be ascertained by thus tracing them back to the apostles, the existence of this chain cannot be taken for granted, but must be proved. But this never can be done. The invalidity of any one consecration, which formed a link in continuing the chain, (and there must have been some such connecting link,) would render all that followed insecure. But we have proved, that this invalidity commences with the very first link in this pretended chain, and that it must have occurred also at later periods.[1] The presumption against this succession, consequently, is almost infinite.[2]

On this theory, therefore, the existence of any christian ministry, or ordinances, or church, is utterly destroyed. But that all these do exist no christian will deny. And hence are we driven to the conclusion, that the presbyterial succession's being the only sure one, and the only one consistent with the truth, is the true succession, and that the prelatical succession is a mere delusive hypothesis — the baseless fabric of a vision.[3] For even were it allowed to be continuous, it can only, as has been seen, be sustained by acknowledging the original equality of presbyters and bishops, and their equal capability of transmitting a valid ordination.

Even allowing, that in the ministerial succession of presbyters many cases of invalidity occurred, they do not affect

1) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. v. &c.

2) See do. Lect. v. and Whateley's Kingdom of Christ. Essay ii. § 30 and 31, pp. 86 and 191.

3) Hence, Milton calls it 'a long usurpation and convicted pseudo-episcopacy of prelates, (Prose Wks. vol. i. p. 152,) and calls them 'false prophets taken in the greatest, dearest, and most dangerous cheat, the cheat of souls.' p. 154.

the ordination of presbyters, generally, nor render the continuance of such ministers at all doubtful. An inheritance, that descends lineally only, may very soon pass away from the original family, and be forfeited by invalidity or failure in the lineal succession, but an inheritance, that descends both lineally and collaterally, and is thus entailed to any individual in any way connected with the family, can hardly fail to find lawful successors. And thus it appears, how, on our principles, the church and all its ordinances are safe, while, on prelatical principles, they cannot be regarded as certainly existing at all, or as capable of restoration. Indeed, this argument has been fully admitted by these men themselves. 'Doubtless,' say they, 'the more clear and simple principle is, that of a ministerial succession, (as distinct from the prelatical,) which is undeniable as a fact, while it is most reasonable as a doctrine, and sufficiently countenanced in scripture for its practical reception.'[1] By this doctrine the permanency of the institution of the ministry depends, not on any exact succession of individuals, but upon the divine charter and commission. And thus, however many may have been unduly appointed or have usurped their functions — however many may have been the modifications introduced by human presumption — still the institution is preserved in its original commission, which is as efficacious and authoritative now as when it was first issued.[2]

A succession of presbyters, therefore, reconciles at once all the difficulties of the case; provides against all possible contingences; is proof against all cavil and objection: is implied in every other theory, and essential to its support; and is fully adequate to perpetuate the ministry through every period of the church, to the end of time. And the presbyterian church being founded on the doctrines of the apostles, and on the same ministerial order which was conferred by the apostles on those 'presbyters whom they ordained in every city,' most rightfully claims, and most undeniably possesses, the true apostolical succession, and is built on that rock against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.[3]

1) Oxford Tracts, No. 7, and Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, as above. Mr. Goode, in his Divine Rule of Faith, ch. viii. vol. ii. p. 76, argues, that there is no scripture proof for any other succession.

2) See Dr. Hawkins on the Apost. Succ. p. 8.

3) See this fully admitted by archbishop Whateley, in his Kingdom of Christ, passim, and § 32, Essay ii. and § 33, § 34, p. 205, &c. § 35, § 36.

# CHAPTER II.

THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION SUSTAINED BY THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY.

## § 1. *The truth of the opposing theories of prelacy and presbytery must be decided by scripture.*

THERE is, as we have seen, a clear issue between the adherents of presbytery and prelacy, these affirming what the others deny, and these claiming what the others appropriate exclusively to themselves. 'It is evident unto all men,' say prelatists, 'diligently reading holy scripture, and ancient authors, that from the apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons.'[1] It is also alleged to be equally evident, that the order of prelates 'alone have power derived from divine institution, to set apart men to preach the word, and to dispense the ordinances of God.'[2] 'Others,' it is added, '*within the last three centuries*, have embraced the opinion, *never before sanctioned*, that presbyters have that power.' It is thus affirmed, that there never was a time when these different orders of the christian ministry were not put forward as apostolical; and that they are to be for ever preserved, unaltered, under the most solemn obligations.[3] Such are the bold and fearless assertions of prelacy. But such claims are, we contend, as baseless as they are arrogant. No such orders are to be recognised in the divine institutes, or in the polity of the apostolical churches. Such assertions are unsupported by the testimony of the apostolical and primitive fathers, and are

1) Pref. to the Form and Manner of making, ordering, and consecrating Bishops, &c.

2) Charleston Gospel Messenger, Feb. 1840, p. 371.

3) Lond. Quart. Rev. Dec. 1839, pp. 57, 65; and Oxf. Tr. vol. i. p. 160.

contradicted by many later authors; by the great mass of protestant christendom; and by the most candid and learned writers in the bosom of the prelacy itself. These positions we shall now attempt to substantiate, and thus confirm and establish the claims of presbyters to be the true and rightful ministerial successors to the apostolic college.

It has already been shown, that, in order to the decision of this and all other questions relating to the doctrines, forms, and order of the church of Christ, we must appeal to the tribunal of the scriptures.[1] We assume, therefore, this position as now determined. Our inquiry simply is as to the asserted fact, that this prelatic system has been conveyed from the apostles and our Lord Jesus Christ. It is on this point we are at issue with prelatists. We reject the prelatic theory of three orders, not merely because it is unwritten, and traditionally handed down, but because it is not proved to have been revealed at all; and because no single article, not capable of proof from the scriptures, has ever yet been traced to the supreme authority of a divine revelation.[2] The only question before us, then, is, the *jus divinum* of prelacy: and how this can be proved when men leave the scriptures, ('which they do, in effect, when they call on the help of succeeding ages to make the scriptures speak plain for them,') is to our minds a most profound mystery.[3] Could the united testimony of the fathers be produced in favor of any opinion, what would it avail against the evidence of scripture? 'What,' asks the apostle, 'though some or all have not believed; shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid. Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.' 'He abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.' Nay, so highly does God esteem his word, 'that he willeth us, in it, to judge both angels and the whole world;' and will, by it, himself judge us at the last great day.

### § 2. *Some determinate scheme of church government contained in scripture.*

But there is a very prevalent opinion, long current in the English Church,[4] that, however distinct and determinate scripture may be in laying down the doctrines of christianity,

1) Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. ii. iii. and iv.

2) See Hawkins's Bampt. Lect. p. 208.

3) Stillingfleet's Divine Right, &c. p. 339, in Plea for Presb. p. 244. See also Sherlock on do. p. 267.

4) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. and in archbishop Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Sect. iii. and xvi.

it does not prescribe, as essential, any form of church government or order. This theory was maintained generally by the English reformers; was most ably defended by Stillingfleet; and is still advocated.[1] But it is now generally and justly exploded, even by those who acknowledge the obscurity or silence of scripture on this subject, and the necessity of oral tradition, in order to its right interpretation and full understanding. We are, therefore, to assume, that some determinate *principles* of church government are laid down in scripture, and that, so far as they can be brought to light, they are imperatively binding upon the conscience; and are to be implicitly followed out in every scheme of church polity claiming to be scriptural.[2] Not that we are to expect in scripture a minute and systematized detail of all the regulations necessary in carrying on the working of this ecclesiastical machinery. We are to steer a middle course between the extreme of Erastianism on the one hand, which denies that any principles of church government whatever are to be found in the word of God; and of Judaism on the other, which would proscribe, as sinful, whatever is not set down in so many words in this divine record. As the New Testament contains no systematic treatise on doctrine or morals, but leaves us to construct a system of belief and practice, by a diligent comparison of its various texts, and the application of its general precepts; so neither does it present any formal digest of ecclesiastical canons, but leaves us to frame our scheme of discipline and polity by a careful analysis and extension of its general principles. The conclusion, therefore, that church polity is unimportant, or not instituted, because it is not fully and systematically drawn forth in scripture, in didactic arrangement, is no less preposterous than would be the supposition, that the system of christian doctrines is, for similar reasons, indeterminate or mutable. The christian revelation is distinguished from the Jewish, as being less a code of minute laws, than of general principles. This character of the gospel dispensation arose, partly, from the circumstances in which the church was at first placed. When the regular delineation of their future polity was given to the Jews, no model existed by which they could have been guided in the application of any comprehensive orders. But when the christian church was made to displace the Jewish,

1) The latest defence of this theory is Dr. Nolan's Catholic Char. of Christianity.

2) See the Episcop. Form of Ch. Govt. by the Rev. John Medley; and Episcopacy Tested by Scripture, by Bishop Onderdonk.

and the whole order and polity of its temple-service, which was local and typical, was done away, God had so ordered it, that in every village, and wherever throughout the world Jews had been scattered abroad, there was established a form of simple, parochial, and universal polity in the regulations of the synagogue. A system of formally digested rules for church government, already drawn out, and in practical operation in all parts of the world, was therefore familiar to the first christian converts, since in almost every place, they primarily consisted of Jewish proselytes. The apostles and evangelists, therefore, writing for the benefit of ordinary persons, who were all well acquainted with this existing constitution of church government, supposing them to have adopted this plan, might be expected to make allusion to it, as to something familiar, and not requiring any very specific detail. Now this is just what the writers of the New Testament do; and from these allusions to ordinances already established, and a diligent comparison of passages, a system may be clearly gathered for the government of the christian church.

Such a system of church government we are irresistibly led to anticipate, in those records which God has left for the benefit of his church, and for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the world have come. This expectation is suggested equally by the consideration of the character of God — of his church — and of his word. God is a God of order not of confusion, and if, in the frame of the natural and the moral world, 'order is heaven's first law,' and the bond and cement of the universe, how can we imagine that this principle would be violated or overlooked, in the construction of that glorious temple, consecrated by the death and sacrifice of his own Son, and by the presence and indwelling of the ever-blessed Spirit? The supposition is impossible, and contradictory to every other manifestation of the divine mind. What is the church, but that visible kingdom, society, or vessel, by which the elected children of God are to be here trained and fitted for mansions in the skies, and borne in safety, across this present sea of life, to the haven of eternal peace? And can we imagine that this instrumentality, for the accomplishment of such glorious ends, would be left like a vessel without a rudder, compass, pilot, or chart, at the mercy of every wave, to be driven about by every wind of doctrine. The supposition is destroyed by its own flagrant absurdity. Look we, then, to the word of God: and whether we consider it as the inspiration of Him who is all-wise, omniscient, and infallible,

or as designed to be a perfect and infallible rule to our faith and practice, we are equally led to expect that it will make us wise in all that pertains to the present enjoyment, and the greatest possible fruition, of the great salvation; and that we shall not therefore be left in uncertainty as to those means, by which we are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God our Saviour. In every view of the matter, we are thus necessarily induced to look to the Bible for satisfactory information as to all points necessary to the establishment, and the permanent well-being and security of that church, which was to comprehend in its wide dominion all nations, all ages, and all conditions.

Nor are we disappointed in this anticipation. There is every thing to sustain it in the developments of this inspired volume. Here we learn, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of the church, which is his house, family, and kingdom — that this church is visible — that to it, as such, Christ has given a ministry, ordinances, and laws — and that its government is derived from Him alone, no other power, civil or spiritual, having authority to legislate for it, or to frame laws, and institute offices binding on the consciences of men. Here too we learn, that this authority and power has been exercised by the King and Head of the church, in the appointment of officers — in the erection of a government — in the institution of standing ordinances — in the prescription of certain and definite ends — in the explicit limitation of his people to whatsoever he has taught — in the promise of his continual presence — and in the threatening of his withdrawal, and the visitations of his wrath.[1] Christ is thus declared to be the 'Head of his body, the church — that in all things he might have the preëminence, God having put all things under his feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the church. The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and the government shall be upon his shoulder.' Just as certainly, therefore, as the prophetical office of Christ excludes all superadded revelations, and his priestly office all other meritorious satisfactions and intercessions; so also does his kingly office imply the same exclusive perfection in the offices, ordinances, censures, laws, and government of his kingdom or church.

The *essentials* of church polity must then be looked for in the scriptures, nor can it be allowed, that man has power to

1) Is. 9:6. Col. 1:18. Eph. 1:22. 23. Tit. 1:5. 1 Tim. 5:14. Matt. Matt. 28:8–10. 2 Tim. 1:2. 1 Cor. 18:15, 16. 1 Thes. 5:14. 1 Pet. 5: 14:14. 2 Tim. 4:2. Col. 3:16. Eph. 2, 3. Eph. 4:11–13. 2 Tim. 4:1. 5:19. 1 Cor. 14:15, 16. 1 Cor. 11: 1 Tim. 4:14. Acts 15, &c., &c.

alter or change those forms or orders, whether integral or accidental to the church, which Christ has instituted. And if presbyterianism shall be found thus consonant to the divine institution, then, before abandoning it, those who wish to alter or amend it, must in all conscience prove that, being thus apostolical, it is nevertheless mutable, or that they have received authority to change it. That which the apostles instituted, in the execution of Christ's commission, and under the promise of his infallible guidance, must be regarded as instituted by Christ himself and by his Spirit, and as unchangeable, except by the same divine and infallible authority. In like manner the form and order thus instituted by the apostles, and for a time carried into operation, must be regarded as perpetually in force, unless they have themselves given directions for the change. And finally, since the idea that there is no divine institution of church government, in its essential elements, destroys all certainty of the purity and character of the church of Christ. Such a supposition cannot be granted, but must be at once rejected, as derogatory to the character of God — of his church, and of his word. For, if the officers of the church are at liberty to change its polity, why may they not also change its ordinances, its doctrines, its scripture, and all things pertaining to life and salvation? But as this supposition is impious and absurd, so also must be the principle from which it flows.

The primitive order of the church is, therefore, distinctly attributed to a divine source, by the apostle Paul: for 'God,' saith he, 'hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, helps, governments.' 'He,' that is Christ, having ascended to heaven, that he might confer all the gifts necessary to the promulgation of the gospel, and the planting of churches, 'gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, and some to be pastors and teachers.' (Eph. 4: 11.) That is, he gave some to be extraordinary officers, 'to prepare the saints for the duties of the fixed or permanent state of the church,' under the ministry of their pastors and teachers, that thus the church might be permanently settled and perfected,[1] (see v. 12.) In another place he speaks 'of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification,' 2 Cor. 10: 8. We are thus exhorted, that 'those things which we have both learned and received and heard and seen in' the apostles, we are 'to do, and the God of peace shall be with us'; while on the other hand we have a most fearful warning, that, 'if any man shall add unto these

1) See Dr. Wilson on the Prim Govt. of the Ch. pp. 277–279.

things God shall add unto him the plagues that are in this book.'

There is, therefore, in its essential principles, a system of church government instituted by God, and of divine right.[1] In these essential principles, we claim for this system of church polity a divine right in the highest sense, that is, the clear, express, and positive institution and command of Christ. In this respect it is permanent and unalterable. In less essential matters we do not, however, claim such express institution; and yet even these should be of divine right, in the second and more extended sense of the term, that is, such as are warranted by the example of Christ, or his apostles, or the churches instituted by them.[2] Whatever government, therefore, pretends to be scriptural and apostolic, must be consonant to this divine pattern. Forms of church polity that are contradictory, cannot both be agreeable to this scriptural model, and whatever is dissonant to it must inevitably be regarded as human and not divine. To make any thing essential to the visible church, which Christ has not instituted, is to intrude upon his sovereignty, assume his sceptre, and dethrone him from his empire. To make nothing essential to the government of the church, is equally to reject his authority and divine supremacy and rule; while to seek in all things his will, and to submit to his teaching, is the course of true, obedient, and faithful subjects of his spiritual kingdom.

Acting on these principles we are constrained to regard the prelatic form of church government, in so far as it transcends the limits of presbyterianism, and asserts the divine authority of three distinct orders in the ministry, to be merely of human invention; whilst we, as assuredly, believe the presbyterian polity, in those essential principles in which it is found to harmonize with the great body of protestantism, to be of divine origin and authority. Distinguishing, however, as we do, doctrines from discipline, the end from the means, and what is fundamental from what, though in itself right and true, and according to divine example, is not essential, we are

1) See Div. Right of Ch. Govt. ch. 1. Also Henderson's Rev. and Consideration, pp. 315–319, 94, 343. Parker's Pol. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 40, pp. 324, &c. Deut. 4 : 12. Josh. 1 : 17. Prov. 30 : 3. Gal. 3 : 15. Rev. 22 : 18. Augustine Cont. Faust, lib. xxx. c. 18. Basil Mora, c. 14. Chrysostom In Agg. c. 1. Cyril in Lev. c. 9. Bede in 1 Pet. 5. Cartwright in Prov. 30, 6, &c. See Sion's Royal Prerog. p. 17. Milton's Prose Wks. vol. i. p. 80, &c. Reason of Ch. Govt. B. i. ch. i. and xi. and Allsop's Melius Inquirendum, pt. ii. pp. 290, 294, Lond. 1697, third ed. Woodgate's Bampton Lect. pp. 160, 162.

2) Bp. Sanderson's Div. Right of the Episcopate. Angl. Fathers, vol. i. p. 301.

still enabled to rejoice in the hope, that where the true doctrines are maintained, and yet aberrations from the scriptural polity are introduced in the conscientious belief that they are in conformity with the divine will, and promotive of the divine glory, there, there are branches of the visible church. Such denominations are valid, although not regular — real, though imperfect churches. They hold to the foundation, and will therefore be acknowledged as true churches. But the wood, hay, and stubble of man's inventions, which they have built thereon, shall finally be condemned,[1] and are now hindrances and impediments to success, and clogs to spiritual enlargement and growth in grace. Such churches may possess the things which *must* be in order to salvation, but not all that *ought* to be in order to edification. They may receive what is essential in revealed truth, and yet not all that is prescribed to us as divine ordinances.

It is, however, the imperative duty of all men to understand, so far as they have ability and opportunity, the character and signs of the true church and kingdom of Christ, and to attach themselves to that branch of it which is found most consonant to the scriptures, in its doctrines, its ordinances, and its constitution.[2] The church, as a divine society, cannot exist without laws, and order, nor can it attain its full maturity with any other polity than that chosen for it by its divine head. To this, therefore, we are bound to adhere, and for this are we called upon to contend earnestly, as well knowing that there is no other foundation so secure and glorious, as that which is laid in Zion, and which is built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.[3]

We are thus summoned to the examination of this subject, not as a question of speculative inquiry but of grave and practical moment. The system of church polity is not a matter of indifference, or a theory about which we may hold discordant opinions, but as imposed upon us by divine authority, and connected with our own best interests. And the whole of ecclesiastical history will testify, that when the simple rites of scriptural order have been set aside, forms of worship, and a system of ecclesiastical despotism, and corrupt doctrine, altogether opposed to the grave, spiritual, manly,

1) Hence, it is a calumny in Bp. Sanderson, to represent presbyterians as making the whole form of their polity as essential as the word and sacraments, in order to cover the shameless effrontery of his own claim, of the highest divine right for both regal and prelatical authority. Div. Right of the Episcop. in Angl. Fathers, vol. i. p. 309.

2) Matt. 5: 19. 1 John, 4: 1. 1 Thess. 5: 1.

3) Dr. Hawkins on the Apost. Succ. p. 22.

and free spirit of christianity, have been introduced. Of this we shall have melancholy illustration, in the final suppression, by prelatic and papal fraud, and tyranny, of the primitive, scriptural, and presbyterian church of Scotland.[1] In the mean time, let us feel, that it is our great and signal privilege to have received, together with apostolic truth, the very structure of apostolic order. We have no church formed by ecclesiastical skill — no humanly devised ministry — but that church and ministry begun by Christ, and continued, expanded, and completed by his apostles. Our system is not only right and proper, but also scriptural and divine, and therefore efficacious, because it is of Christ's institution and promise. And while we may rejoice in believing that other churches differing from ours are blessed of God, we may be very sure that ours is a church moulded and fashioned after his own pattern.

§ 3. *The character of the church and its ministry, during our Lord's continuance with it, was presbyterian and not prelatical.*

Let us now proceed to inquire, whether this system of prelacy, as founded upon the assumption of three essentially distinct orders of ministers, was instituted by Christ during the period in which he ministered as the teacher sent from God. This is affirmed by prelatists,[2] and this we deny.

Since the whole question is involved in the exclusive claims of the order of prelates as distinct from and superior to that of presbyters and deacons, it will be necessary to understand what are the peculiar powers or prerogatives attributed to this highest order. We shall then be able more satisfactorily to determine the character and office of the several functionaries spoken of throughout the New Testament. For as it is on all hands admitted, that mere variety of names does not prove a variety of orders, this can be ascertained only by the nature of the functions with which such names are connected.

The chief powers believed to be resident in prelates, as the first order of the christian ministry, are described by archbishop Potter to be, preaching, praying, baptizing, administering the Lord's supper, ordaining ministers, and exercising

1) Hetherington's Hist. of Ch. of Scotl. p. 17.

2) See Lectures on Apost. Suc., Lect. vi. p. 148. Additional Note.

spiritual jurisdiction.[1] Similar are the views of bishop Bilson, bishop Taylor,[2] Dr. Chandler,[3] and Dr. Bowden.[4]

Hadrian Saravia, in explanation of the ordinary functions of an apostle, as described by St. Paul in the words 'dispensation of the mysteries of God,' (1 Cor. 4: 1,) more logically, and we think accurately, arranges them, under three divisions—first, the preaching of the gospel; secondly, the administration of the sacraments; thirdly, authority for governing the church. 'To the third part,' he adds, 'further pertains the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and of binding and loosing on earth what shall be bound and loosed in heaven; and this has two subdivisions, one the ordination of ministers, the other censorship of manners.'[5]

Such, then, being the self-acknowledged powers claimed for prelates, we proceed to inquire, whether these functions were conferred by our Lord Jesus Christ upon any one class of men, to be exercised by them over two interior orders? The Rev. T. Hartwell Horne, in enumerating the functions of prelates, identifies their office with such a superintendency, making it to consist in these four things: '1. in ordaining presbyters and deacons: 2. in superintending the doctrine of these ministers; 3. in superintending their conduct: 4. in regulating those matters in the church not settled by divine authority.'[6] If, then, there were such prelates during our Lord's ministry, we may demand some proof of their commission and authority. Where are these orders enumerated in the record of our Saviour's life? Where do we find their respective commissions? Where the distinct enumeration of

1) On Ch. Govt. ch. v. To this might be added, if it could be regarded as even an imaginary power or ascertained ordinance, the power of confirmation.

2) 'Yet the apostles' charge to teach, baptize, and administer the Lord's supper, to bind and loose sinners in heaven and in earth, to impose hands for the ordaining of pastors and elders, these parts of the apostolic function and charge are not decayed, and cannot be wanted in the church of God. There must either be no church, or else these must remain; for without these no church can continue.' * See also Sinclair's Vind. of the Episc. Succ. pp. 16, 18.

3) The powers especially distinctive of a prelate, are, according to Dr. Chandler, 'the powers of government, ordination, and confirmation.'†

4) Bowden, 1. Works on Episcop. vol. ii. p. 140.

5) Of the Priesthood, pp. 52, 53, ch. 1. See also Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. Lond. ed. 1840, pp. 90, 99, 118, 148, &c. Bishop Sanderson enumerates what is peculiar to bishops under ordination and managing the keys. See Div. Right of the Episcopate in Anglican Fathers, vol. i. pp. 305, 307.

6) See these points fully illustrated in Note A to his Discourse on the Conformity of the Ch. of Engl. to Apo. Precept and Pattern, Lond. 1834.

*) Bishop Bilson, Perp. Govt. of Chr. Ch. ch. ix. p. 105.

†) App. on Behalf of the Ch. of Engl. in Amer. p. 14.

their several functions? Or where are we informed, that these orders were instituted by Christ, and made essential to the constitution of his church?

That on different occasions Christ sent forth the twelve disciples, and other seventy also, we are, indeed, informed. But this he could not do in the character of an order in the christian ministry; since, as has been already shown, the christian church was not established until after Christ's resurrection, when and not till when he had finished his work as our Mediator — laid the foundations of his kingdom — and established the everlasting covenant. That plenitude of power whereby, as King and Head of his church, he now administers its affairs, was then given to Him in recompense of His humiliation, sufferings, and death, (Phil. 2: 8–11,) and was manifested by Him in the bestowment of these very ministerial offices. (Eph. 4: 8, 11, 12.)[1] These individuals, we must therefore conclude, were employed by our Lord merely as his ministering disciples, to execute temporary and special commissions, and not as organized, separate, and perpetual officers. The good tidings they were to proclaim were only of the *approaching* kingdom of heaven. It was a joyful *expectation* they were commissioned to spread; and the preparation of men's hearts for the coming of the kingdom, was all they had authority to enforce. Having executed this required embassy they returned to Christ, and rendered in an account of their proceedings. Of the seventy we read nothing further than that they were thus sent forth. We are not informed that they were ever afterwards engaged in the same service. The twelve, however, after their return, continued with Christ,[2] because they were his chosen witnesses, and selected as his future apostles or extraordinary ambassadors; that they might, by communication with him, be fully instructed and qualified for their important charge; and be publicly known as his followers and as his companions during the whole course of his ministry. Christ formed these twelve as it were into an apostolic college — the exemplar of all theological seminaries — and for the space of three years continued to indoctrinate them in the truths pertaining to his kingdom. It is idle, therefore, to attempt to transform these temporary officers into permanent orders of the christian ministry. All that Christ did up to the close of his life, was preparatory to the great and final consummation achieved by his death. Till then there could be no christian church, no christian ordinances,

1) See Chap. I.

2) See Potter, on Ch. Govt. p. 45.

and no christian ministry. These disciples were not, then, authorized to act as apostles in proclaiming the kingdom of heaven as established — or in making it known to all without distinction — but were on the contrary sent out on a temporary agency, and limited expressly to the Jewish cities and people, as the field of their operations.[1]

It may be objected to this view of the matter, that the twelve are unquestionably denominated apostles during our Lord's ministry, and that they must therefore be regarded as truly apostles. This title is, it is confessed, once used by the evangelist, in giving a list of their names, but this he might have done either in the general and unlimited sense of that term, or because he wrote after they had received this title in its specific designation. Accordingly we find, that when our Lord first gave them this name, (Luke, 6: 13.) they had received no commission whatever, so that they must have received it in anticipation, or in an unofficial sense.[2] This view of the matter is remarkably confirmed, by a reference to what is regarded by prelatists, as the first commission of the twelve. (Matt. 10.) In delivering to them, on this occasion, his instructions, Christ does not employ the term apostles. It was 'his twelve *disciples*' Jesus called together. It was to 'his twelve disciples' he gave miraculous endowments. It was 'these twelve' he sent forth 'two by two.' Throughout the entire discourse delivered by our Saviour on that occasion, he speaks of 'his disciples.' Nay, even after having been thus commissioned, they are still spoken of, not as apostles, but as 'the twelve disciples,' (see Matt. 11: 1.) and it was in this character they went through the towns and villages preaching that men should repent, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Until they had thus returned back, and Jesus was going up to Jerusalem to suffer, the twelve 'are generally, if not always, mentioned under the common appellation of disciples, as far as I can remember.'[3] The sole duty enjoined upon them was to make this proclamation, and to present miraculous attestation to the truth of Christ's character and mission as the long promised and expected Messiah. Having, as Mark tells us, fulfilled this work, (ch. 6: 12, 13.) 'they returned, and told Jesus all that they had done.' (Luke 9: 10.) Their commission was now fully executed. They were now to accompany Jesus,

1) See Hinds's Hist. of the Rise and Progress of Christianity, vol. i. p. 149. 'Their former commission, as from its nature might seem natural, expired on their return to resume their attendance on him.' See also in Lord Barrington's Works, vol. ii. pp. 11, 12, 43, 69, 92.

2) See Potter on Ch. Govt. pp. 199, 204.

3) Lord Barrington's Theol. Wks. vol. ii. p. 9.

to the intent that they might be the better acquainted with 'all that Jesus began both to do and teach,' until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.'[1] They thus 'continued with him in his temptations.'[2] And most certain it is, that there is nothing in this commission having the remotest bearing upon the institution of three orders of ministers; or upon the appointment of these twelve as an order of prelates, who were as such to ordain, govern, and direct two other orders under their jurisdiction. In proof of this, we need only refer to the endless variations of opinion among those, who have attempted to make out, from this commission, the three orders; many being of opinion, that, until Christ's death, the apostles were presbyters, and Christ alone bishop or prelate: others, that during the same period the apostles were prelates; others again affirming, that the apostles were never commissioned till after Christ's resurrection; and others being of opinion, that, in every period, the apostles were extraordinary officers, and could have no successors in the ministry of the church.[3] Bishop Sherlock, indeed, thinks he finds these three orders enumerated in the closing verses of this commission,[4] the apostles being referred to in one place, (Matt. 11: v. 40,) and the other orders under the title of prophets,[5] (v. 41.) But nothing can be wilder, or more gratuitous, than such baseless assumptions. For if we will be guided by the previous context, as universally explained, the reference must be made to all christians indifferently, while no sanction whatever can be found for interpreting the word prophet as meaning the two orders of presbyter and deacon, in distinction from that of prelates, or for applying the latter portion of this passage (v. 41) in any other sense than as explanatory of the preceding. (v. 40.)

The truth in the case, then, is this, that, as our Lord approached the termination of his ministry on earth, he thought it necessary to prepare the way for those scenes which were to transpire in Jerusalem, and therefore sent forth the twelve, that the eyes of all might be directed to

1) See Acts, 1: 12. See also ibid, v. 21, 22; and Luke, 22: 28.

2) See Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. pp. 6, 7.

3) See the authorities for these several views in Lect. on Apost. Succ. p. 149. Lect. vi. Note A.

4) Matt. 10: 40, 41.
He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.
He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

5) Sherlock's Wks. vol. iii. p. 281.

him as the angel of the covenant. Being moved also with pity, when he saw how 'the harvest truly was great, and the laborers so few,' he commissioned seventy other disciples to go forth on a similar errand of divine mercy.

But it is most confidently believed by most prelatists, that in these seventy we have a definite order of ministers, essentially distinct from the twelve, both in respect to commission and to powers; and that in connexion with Christ, considered as embodying the order of prelates, we have the ever-to-be venerated three orders of the prelatic hierarchy.[1] Now, in order at once to bring this matter to the test, we will here present the respective commissions of the twelve, and of the seventy, as they have been harmonized by a rigid defender of the prelacy.

THE COMMISSION OF THE TWELVE.

*Matt.* 21: 1. *Mark*, 6: 7–14. *Luke*, 9: 1–7.

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils. And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. These twelve Jesus sent forth by two and two to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick; and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach,

THE COMMISSION OF THE SEVENTY.

*Luke*, 10: 1–17.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into the harvest. Go your ways: behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be unto this house. And if the Son of peace be

1) 'It cannot be denied,' says Heylin, 'but that the apostles were superior to these seventy, both in place and power.' Hist. of Episcop. Part i. cap. i. sect. 9. See also Bellarmine De Clericis, cap. 14, 'bishops succeed the apostles, the priests or presbyters come in place of the disciples.' See also Willet's Synopsis, Pap. p. 236.

saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. And he commanded that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; and he said unto them, provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, but be shod with sandals; nor yet staves, neither bread, for the workman is worthy of his meat. And he said unto them, into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and whatsoever house ye enter into there abide, till ye go thence, and when ye come into an house, salute it, and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return unto you; and whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet, the very dust from under your feet, for a testimony against them. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves, &c.

there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you, &c.

Such, then, are the respective commissions of the twelve and the seventy. Now, that 'the seventy were distinct from and inferior to the twelve' is, it is argued, '*evident*.'[1] But in what were they thus distinct and inferior? Not, we answer, in name or title. The twelve, we have seen, were only

1) Brokesby's Hist. of the Govt. of the Prim. Ch. Lond. 1712. p. 9.

termed apostles by anticipation — in a general sense — and that too, rarely, since they are most frequently, and even subsequently to this event, styled disciples. Besides, these individuals are denominated '*other* seventy,' and were therefore of the same order as the twelve, whom Christ had named apostles. In the original language it is said Christ, ἀπέστειλεν, sent forth the seventy. (Luke x. 1.) that is, he made them *apostles*, the term apostle coming from the word ἀποστέλλειν, to send forth. And as the twelve were called apostles, because *sent forth* by Christ, so also were the seventy apostles, since they also were *sent forth* by Christ.[1] Neither did the seventy differ from the twelve in regard to their appointment. All priests and deacons, according to the prelatic theory, are ordained by prelates. But in this case, both the twelve and the seventy were sent forth by the immediate and superior call of Christ himself. Thus it is expressly said, 'the Lord appointed other seventy also,' or gave them an appointment similar to that of the twelve. It is pretended, that before ordaining the twelve Christ spent the night in prayer. But in the first place, what connection had a customary practice with this extraordinary act? (See Mark, 1 : 35.) And then, in the second place, are we not taught, even by Bishop Beveridge, that the apostles were never ordained during our Saviour's life?[2] And that the commission of the seventy was the same as that of the twelve is distinctly asserted by Hooker, who says, their 'commission to preach and baptize was the same which the apostles had.'[3] The seventy did not differ, therefore, from the twelve in the mission, or duties, to which they were appointed. They, like the twelve, were to precede the Messiah wherever he was to come. They also were sent forth to preach. They also were commissioned to exercise their office through the same extent of territory. Neither were the seventy different from the twelve in the power communicated to them, since both were empowered with authority to work miracles, as the delegated heralds, or ambassadors, of the Lord from heaven. (Luke, 10 : 16, 17 ; 6 : 10.)[4] In short, the nature, object, and end of the commission of the seventy, were the same with those given to the twelve, the wording in both cases being almost identical. The qualifications of both also were the same, both being supernatural and miraculous. The seventy were also sent

1) Compare Matt. 10 : 5, 16, and Luke, 10 : 3, and Luke, 6 : 13.

2) Wks. vol. ii. p. 112.

3) Eccl. Polity, B. v. § 77.

4) 'The instructions and powers given them, (the seventy,) are exactly the same with those which had been before given to the apostles.' Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. i. p. 8. See the whole passage.

forth with no subordination to the twelve;[1] without any apparent connection with them; and certainly without being made dependent upon them either for authority or direction. That the apostles were destined to a higher and permanent office in Christ's established kingdom is true; but of such preëminence, or of their apostolic office in its formal, distinctive, and permanent character, there is nothing to be found in this previous mission — which was temporary, preparatory, and probationary. If, therefore, it is sufficient to identify two classes of officers, that they are employed on a temporary mission; that they are called by the same name; that they receive the same appointment, and from the same hands; that they are deputed to the same work, with equal authority and powers; then, however preëminent one class may have become by a future and more exalted elevation — the seventy and the twelve disciples, were, during our Lord's ministry, of the same order and dignity; that is, they were both presbyters.[2]

The apostles during our Saviour's lifetime, were, says bishop Beveridge, 'answerable to the priests of the second order,'[3] and yet, he adds, 'they had no consecration.'[4] The doctrine of the church has certainly been, that presbyters succeed to the apostles. Thus Dr. Willet[5] declares, 'that priests succeed in the place of the apostles is evident out of their own decrees, distinct. 68, c. 5.' The apostles, therefore, during our Lord's ministry were presbyters only, and not prelates, and since the seventy were in all essential respects identified with them, there was during this period but one order of ministers in the church.

In confirmation of this judgment, we beg leave to present to the attentive consideration of our readers, the opinion of Dr. Whitby, who is renowned amongst the hosts of the prelatists. 'Whereas,' says he, 'some compare the bishops to the apostles, the seventy to the presbyters of the church; and thence conclude that divers orders of the ministry were instituted by Christ himself; it must be granted that the ancients did believe these two to be divers orders, and that those of the seventy were inferior to the order of the apostles; and sometimes they make the comparison here mentioned. But then it must be also granted, that this com-

1) The seventy are twice named in Luke 10, and nowhere else in the New Testament.

2) See Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 75. Hinds's Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. i. p. 153. Medley on Episcop. p. 24. Laud on Lit. and Episcop. p. 237.

3) Wks. vol. ii. p. 112.

4) Ibid.

5) Syn. Pap. p. 273

parison will not strictly hold: for the seventy received not their mission as presbyters do, from bishops, but immediately from their Lord Christ, as well as the apostles: and in their first mission were plainly sent on the same errand, and with the same power, and it is obviously observable (says another) in the evangelical records, that the christian church was not, could not be founded until our Lord was risen, seeing it was to be founded on his resurrection. Our Martyr Cyprian (as appears from his reasonings on divers occasions) seems very well to have known and very distinctly to have observed, that the apostles themselves got not their commission to be governors of the christian church till after the resurrection. And no wonder, for this, their commission is most observably recorded, John 20: 23. No such thing is any where recorded concerning the seventy. Nothing more certain than that that commission, which is recorded Luke 10, did constitute them only temporary missionaries, and that for an errand which could not possibly be more than temporary. That commission contains in its own bosom clear evidences that it did not install them into any standing office at all, much less in any standing office in the christian church, which was not yet in being when they got it. Could that commission which is recorded Luke 10, any more constitute the seventy standing officers of the christian church, than the like commission recorded Matt. 10, could constitute the twelve such standing officers? But it is manifest that the commission recorded Matt. 10, did not constitute the twelve, governors of the christian church; otherwise, what need of a new commission to that purpose after the resurrection? Presumable, therefore, it is, that St. Cyprian did not at all believe that the seventy had any successors, office-bearers in the christian church, seeing it is so observable that they themselves received no commission to be such office-bearers.'

Even, however, were it granted, that in the twelve and the seventy disciples we have two distinct orders of ministers, the theory of the prelacy is still in want of a third rank, in order to complete its hierarchy; and for this order we are referred to our blessed Lord, who is denominated the high-priest of our profession. Now were we to allow that, while on earth, our Lord ministerially represented the first or highest order of ministers, and that he was therefore the first prelate; could we for a moment overlook the inexcusable temerity with which a supposition, so derogatory to our Lord's character, so blasphemous in its tendency and spirit, and so repugnant to the ineffable and unapproachable dignity of his glorious

nature is entertained; of what possible advantage would it be to the cause of prelacy? For not only are we instructed that Christ is 'the apostle and high priest of our profession;' we are also informed, that, in this office, he can have no possible successors, nor any partners in his work, character, and mediation. He is, we are assuredly told, 'a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec, and ever liveth,' as such, 'to make intercession for us.' Like Melchizedec, Christ neither succeeded unto any other in his office of kingly priesthood, nor is he capable of being succeeded in his royal honors. Like him, who was his chosen type, he 'continueth ever, in his unchangeable priesthood, being made a priest, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.' As our great high-priest, Christ stands singly and alone, the first and the last of his order, the beginning and the end, superior to Aaron, to Levi, and to Abraham.[1] He is 'the one mediator between God and man,' and 'the only advocate with the Father,' the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, of whose kingdom, dominion, and overruling presidency, as the head of his church, there shall be no end. From this very argument, therefore, and the consideration of the prelacy of Christ, we are conclusively taught that such an order as that of prelates neither can, nor ought to exist in any church pretending to be christian. 'One is our master, even Christ.' He alone is our prelate, our pope, our supreme and ever-living head. The prelatic theory is founded upon the dethronement of Christ from his priestly office; and the abjuration of the infinite merit of his sacrifice and intercession, as eternally presented before God in the courts of heaven, for the uninterrupted continuation of the happiness and glory of his people.[2]

To this one error, the offspring of this prelatic hypothesis, begotten by vanity and pride, and the lust of domination, is to be traced that prime element in all the systems of anti-christian superstition and corruption, the priestly character of the gospel ministry, and the consequent doctrines of altars, and sacrifices, and mysteries, and all the profane idolatries by which men have departed from the faith.[3] Christ is first made one link in the chain of succession from Aaron to Pe-

1) Heb. VII. Dr. Hawkins on the Hist. Script. of the Old Test. p. 156.

2) 'No one indeed can deny,' says Dr. Chapman, in his sermons to Presbyterians, vol. i. p. 148, 'the perpetual tenure by which Jesus is sustained as the grand hierarchy of the christian church. According to the psalmist, 'The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest after the order of Melchizedec.' And four times does the apostle to the Hebrews reiterate the declaration.'

3) Dr Hawkins, in his Discourses on the Historical Scriptures of the Old Testament, (p. 156,) says that,

ter, conveying down, in holy orders, absolute contact with the God of all the earth.'[1] Prelates, and through them all the other orders, are then made successors to Christ in this office, as links in the unbroken chain from Christ to the end of time. As his ministers, or stewards, or ambassadors, or lieutenants in his kingdom upon earth, they are also made his vicegerents in all his three offices as Priest, Prophet, and King. Christ is thus displaced and dethroned by his own ministers, and is to all practical purposes as good as annihilated. We are, therefore, unblushingly required, as Dr. Hickes affirms, by 'the doctrine of the catholic church,' to honor 'the bishop as the high-priest representing God, representing God as a prince and Christ as a priest,' 'and therefore we ought to regard the bishop as God!'[2] Well might John Walker say, that this whole theory is, indeed, a fiction so monstrously absurd, that it might excite laughter if it were not so monstrously profane, that indignation rather must predominate in the christian who considers it.[3]

We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion, that, during our Lord's manifestation upon earth, as our Emmanuel, nothing like this triple order of distinctly classified ministers, with their subordinated dignities and functions, was to be found in the administration of the church. And that prelatists should have ventured to assert the contrary,[4] and to insist upon it so strenuously as they do, would indeed be amazing, had we not been already admonished of the fact, that boldness of assertion is found to be generally in exact proportion to the weakness of the proof by which it is sustained. Either Christ was himself an order in the priesthood, or he was not. If he was not, as we believe, then, during his ministry, there was but one class of ministers employed in executing the purposes of their temporary commission, and thus is the principle of presbyterian parity established, and the presbyterian

'mistaking the means for the end, the shadow for the substance, is the common error of weak and ignorant men. And the correction of this error is one of the remarkable purposes to which the preaching of the gospel before the law is applied by St. Paul himself.'

1) The Church, the Bishop, or Korah. Two sermons by Frederick A. Glover, Lond. 1838, p. 72–74. In Dr. Brown on Civil Obedience, p. 43, Supplement, notes.

2) Ignat. ad Ephes. c. 6. and ad Smyrn. c. 9. Hicke's, vol. ii. p. 22–24, Conf. ii. Beveridge Can. Apost. Vind. lib. ii. c.2. §11. In Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ, pp. 231–237.

3) See also the strong language of the archbishop of Cashel, in charge to the clergy of his Diocese, Dublin, 1822, p. 20. Also of the bishop of Chester, in the Lond. Chr. Obs. Dec. 1841, page 761. The Churchman's Monthly Rev. 1841. p. 274, 2. &c Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ, p. 203. Essays on the Church, p. 331. Powell on Tradition, Supplement, pp. 6, 7, &c.

4) This was the position taken by bishop Hobart and others, in the

shown to be the true and only succession that can exist. If, however, Christ must be regarded as an order of the ministry, then during his life there was but one other; and ever since that time, there must be, on the prelatic theory, at least four orders, and not three. So that in either case, to substantiate the all-important claims of prelates, Christ must be deposed from his office, and dethroned from his kingly and everlasting throne.[1]

Essays on Episcopacy in the Albany Centinel, N. Y. 1806, and quoted in Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 86. Also by Dr. Chapman in his writings, and by the present episcopal writers generally.

1) See the argument very conclusively presented in Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 87, &c.

# CHAPTER III.

THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE TRUE APOSTOLICAL OR MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION, SUSTAINED BY THE CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF THE CHURCH WHEN OUR LORD ASCENDED UP INTO HEAVEN.

§ 1. *The apostles were not commissioned before the delivery of the final commission by our ascending Saviour, with an examination of John*, 20: 21.

We are now brought to that period when the christian church was openly and permanently established, upon the corner-stone of Christ's death, resurrection, and ever-living power, as Head over all things to his church. We are, therefore, to inquire what charter, commission, or law, the inaugurated Redeemer, the Counsellor and Legislator of his church, has left behind him, for its guidance and instruction. Nor are we long in finding our way to that last, solemn, authoritative, and full commission, delivered by our Lord just before ascending up into heaven. It has, indeed, been supposed by some, that the apostles were consecrated to their high function on the evening of the day after Christ's ascension, when he told them, 'as my Father hath sent me, so I send you,' (John, 20: 21,) and that then they received their peculiar prelatical authority. But nothing can be more gratuitous and vain than such a supposition. It appears that on this occasion, as Mr. Scott well explains the passage, 'the apostles and other disciples met together, in some room which they had procured; probably in order to join in prayer and supplication.'[1] The evangelist uses the general term 'disciples,' which, in the very chapter preceding, (19: 31,) is applied to Joseph of Arimathea, and was, we know, given to the seventy, (Luke, 10.) He also particularly notices the fact, that it was on the first day of the week,' which day was

1) Commentary, in loco.

thus early set apart in commemoration of Christ's resurrection. This interview, therefore, was not merely with the twelve, but with all the disciples of Christ; and was designed to comfort their sorrowing hearts, to inspirit their drooping faith, and to impart to them that peace they were previously led to expect. Having, therefore, repeated to them the assurance of his peace, Christ 'renewed and confirmed to them, their apostolic commission; sending them forth to declare his truth to the world, and to be his ambassadors and vicegerents.' [1]

We would also remark, that the exclusive application of these words of Christ to prelates, is no less arbitrary, and a complete begging of the question, than the interpretation given to them by the Romanists, who allege, that as the Father sent Christ to offer sacrifice for sin, so did Christ send his priests to offer the sacrifice of the mass. Both these explanations, however, the prelatic and the Romish, are perfectly gratuitous.

We remark, further, that the application of these words to popes, prelates, or to any christian ministers whatsoever, in their full literal wording, so as to convey the idea that they have the same power conveyed to them by Christ, which was conveyed to Christ by God, is gross impiety, and blasphemous presumption. The supposition is impossible in the very nature of things. The human nature of Christ never existed as a distinct person. His mediatorial power was not committed to the human nature of Christ, but to the human and divine natures as together constituting one person. It was as a divine person, and not merely as human, Christ had all power given to Him, and was able to forgive sins and to exercise all other authority. It was, therefore, as God and man in one person the Father sent the Son. The persons here addressed, then, be they who they may, could not be sent with the same authority or in the same manner as Christ was sent by God. The supposition lands us in open heresy or blasphemy, and the words therefore must be understood as we have explained them, as referring only to the fact, that as Christ was sent by the Father and authorized by Him, so were they and all true ministers sent by Christ, and authorized by Him to preach his gospel, and to conduct the affairs of his kingdom.

But it is added, that 'when Christ had said this, he breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost.' These words, however, can only be understood prophetically. As Christ

1) Scott, ibid.

now breathed upon them, so certainly were they to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, which should come upon them as the sound of a mighty rushing wind. So it is expressed by Luke, who says, 'behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, — (not, indeed, at this time, but before long and most certainly,) — tarry ye, therefore, in the city of Jerusalem, until ye are endowed with this power from on high.'[1] He also informs us, that our Saviour, just before his ascension, ordered them 'not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.'[2] The apostle John, also, declares the same truth, when he records our Saviour's discourse at Capernaum: 'but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe in him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.'[3] And thus we are further informed, 'that Christ being exalted at the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye see and hear,'[4] and by which, for the first time, they were empowered to act as his inspired apostles.[5] And hence it will be observed, that the promise here given is so worded, as to be fully comprehended in that fulfilment. Neither is any general promise annexed, such as forms so conspicuous a feature in the great commission: as if to show most clearly, that the latter alone was to be looked upon as the full, final, and perpetual commission of the ministry, for which Christ's privileged disciples were now prepared. Thus when Christ addressed Peter in the name of all the apostles, saying, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,' he says, 'not I *now* give, but I WILL give.' Now that future commission, was the final commission which was given in His last conversation with them upon earth.[6]

## § 2. *The commissions, recorded in the gospels of Matthew and of John, not different.*

It has also been attempted to be shown, that the commissions, as recorded by Matthew and by John, are different, the latter containing in it the delegation of the powers of gov-

1) Luke, 24: 49.
2) Acts, 1: 4, 5, 8.
3) John, 7: 39.
4) Acts, 2: 33, and 5: 30 – 30. See Lord Barrington's Theol. Wks. vol. i. pp. 15, 16, 137, 207, and vol. ii. p. 10.
5) See Barrington's Theol. Wks. ii. pp. 11, 12, 43, 69, 92. Also Neander's Hist. of the Plant. of the Chr. Ch. by the Ap. vol. i. pp. 3, 8, &c.
6) So speaks bishop Burgess in his Tracts on Origin and Indep. of the Anc. Brit. Ch. p. 13. Lond. 1815.

ernment or jurisdiction, in the words, 'As my Father hath sent me even so send I you.' But to this it may be replied, that as the gospel by Matthew was originally designed for a different class of christians than that of the apostle John, and was in circulation long before it, whatever ministers were appointed in *their* churches must have been set apart by virtue of this commission, as recorded by Matthew. If, then, the other contains provision for a different order of ministers, there must have existed different forms of polity under apostolic sanction. Besides, this theory, as advanced by Mr. Leaming and others, is suicidal and absurd. It is suicidal, for, while this passage does speak of the Father sending Christ, and of Christ sending those whom he addressed, it does not say a word about their sending any one else, or of their having any authority to do so. And if it is urged, that this power must be implied, because necessary, this we grant; but then this is as perfectly true of the promise given in Matthew, which is much more full and explicit, and must, on the same principle, be allowed to convey, in perpetuity, to all acting under that commission, its plenary powers; and since this was avowedly given, to the seventy, or some of them, as well as to the twelve, it necessarily conveys to presbyters the whole powers of the ministerial office.

This theory is also absurd, since it supposes the apostles to have received two separate commissions, of different import and authority, and that too after they had gone through the three gradations of ministerial rank, and were, as prelatists teach, already prelates. On this ground we must believe, that they were now consecrated arch-prelates, and afterwards popes. This absurdity will further appear from hence, that the commission in John, which contains, as is said, the highest authority,[1] was given, in the order of time, before the other, which nevertheless conveys only a subordinate authority, and thus, according to this theory, the twelve, after having been ordained prelates, were again commissioned, first, as bishops, and then, to consummate their episcopal ascent, as presbyters. So that, after all, according to this view, the presbyterate is the highest order in the church, and the episcopate an inferior and subordinate one.

This promise, therefore, must be regarded as synonymous with that contained in the general commission, or as specially designed to prepare the minds of the disciples for its reception, and to end with such an application. It was thus

1) See Paley's Wks. vol. vi. p. 91.

intended to sustain their faith, hope, and courage, by the renewal of their apostolic appointment, and the present bestowment of a divine blessing; and to assure them of the certain fulfilment of the promise, that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, should yet be given to them, to guide them into all truth, and to fit and prepare them for their high and holy calling. It is, therefore, to be considered as addressed to the apostles, not exclusively, though emphatically: but to them, in the name of, and as representing, the ministers of the gospel, to the end of the world. Such an interpretation alone can save us from inextricable confusion and palpable absurdity.[1] Nor does it involve any real difficulty, since it will be our object to show, that, as his ambassadors, every true minister represents Christ in his prophetical, priestly, and kingly office, in which he was sent forth by God; and are by Him commissioned to teach, to rule, and to preside over the worship and ordinances of his church, and to administer its laws in his name, by his authority, and sustained by his powerful authentication of their acts.

§ 3. *The final commission delivered by Christ is the true and only charter of the christian ministry and church.*

We are to look, therefore, to the final commission, delivered by our ascending Lord, as the complete and permanent charter of the ministry. For, whatever application be given to the promise already considered: inasmuch as it is blasphemous to suppose any human being can be as absolutely empowered as Christ was by the Father,[2] which the words literally might be made to declare, the actual powers to be intrusted to the permanent ministers, can only be ascertained from this formal charter. All the power, authority, and jurisdiction vested in the ministry, is conveyed to them by this commission. We have here the supreme law of Christ's house, as to the character and functions of its officers. So that, whatever power or order is claimed by any pretended successors of the apostles, not sanctioned by this charter, and any attempt to found such claims upon the authority of Christ, is a gross usurpation, which every christian man is bound to disown and to resist. Every such imposition is

1) Mr. Benson, in his Disc. on the Power of the Ministry, has very ably presented an argument to show, that the words imply inspiration — and are applied exclusively to the apostles, and cannot possibly apply to any minister who does not possess such supernatural gifts. See Disc. II. on this text, p. 26, &c.

2) See Dr. Hawkins on the Apost Succ. p. 18.

null and void, and all efforts to constrain others to obedience to it, is a treasonable act of daring rebellion against the supremacy of Christ. 'Go and make disciples of all nations is the first foundation of apostolic ordinations.'[1]

In this commission the departing Head and Counsellor of his church, having finished his own ministry, and laid the foundations of the church, transfers to others the duty of carrying it on in His name, by His authority, and through His ever-living agency and presence. It will be found, therefore, summarily, to comprehend the laws and institutes of the christian church. After asserting his own omnipotence and the plenitude of his power and authority, in consequence of which he had the authority and right to commission his ministers to convert, baptize, and instruct the world, Christ here lays down, *first*, the principle of increase, or the law by which the propagation of the truth, and the increase and perpetuity of the church, should be secured, and this is by the ministry of men;—'go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.' Christ here prescribes, *secondly*, the law of admission or initiation, by which, when thus indoctrinated and prepared, men should be received as members, into the church, and this is by 'baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' *Thirdly*, we have here the law of discipline, by which, when thus initiated, the members of the christian church should be instructed and governed, 'teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' And, *fourthly*, we have in this commission the motive, or encouragement, to perseverance in these christian efforts, and this is the assurance of Christ's abiding presence and

1) See Ogilby on Lay Baptism, N. Y. 1842. pp. 20, 22. Dr. Bowden, in Wks. on Episcopacy, vol. ii. p. 142. Dr. Cooke, in ibid, vol. ii. p. 202. Bishop Croft's True State of the Church, in Scott's Coll. of Tracts, vol. vii. p. 300. Hinds's Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. i. p. 149. Potter on Ch. Govt. Daubeny's Guide to the Church, vol. ii. p. 261. Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 13, &c. and p. 15, § 4. The Methodist Mag. and Quart. Rev. July, 1831, pp. 325, 326. Bridge's Christian Ministry, part iv. ch. i. Scriptural Grounds of Union, by Prof. Scholefield of Cambridge, p. 23. Bp. Sanderson's Div. Right of the Episcop. in Angl. Fathers, vol. i. p. 312, and bishop Sparrow, in do. p. 334. Benson's Disc. on the Power of the Ministry, Disc. II. pp. 31, 32. Bishop Burgess' Tracts, as above, p. 13. Lond. 1815. Lectures on the Acts, by the Rev. John Brewster, Rector, &c. Lond. 1808. vol. i. p. 356.

'Now we had always considered, says the Churchman's Monthly Rev. that ministers received their commission as delegated by our Divine Head, (John 20: 22,) and therefore that they were representatives, *not of the Church, but of Christ*, and that we were 'so to account of them as ministers of Christ:' (1 Cor. 4: 1:) in labor, indeed, the servants of the Church, but in authority, 'ambassadors for Christ. (1 Cor. 4: 5; 5: 20.) We need scarcely remind our clerical readers, that this was *their* ordination commission.'

blessing — 'and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'[1]

In short, our Lord here institutes the christian church, as his kingdom or society, by the appointment of officers; by giving to them the power of administering the rules, and communicating the instructions, made known by Him, for its government; and by giving authority for the admission and exclusion of members.[2] And when it is remembered, that in delivering this commission, our Lord spake to Jews brought up in the daily observance of the worship and order of the synagogue, which had its officers, its laws, and its forms of admitting members, it will be at once perceived, that, in these words, there is a clear and explicit enunciation of the whole platform of the christian church. For 'this power was not given to the apostles' *persons* only, but Christ here promised to be with them, in that *office*, to the end of the world; that is, to them and their successors in that pastoral office.'[3]

§ 4. *This commission was not given to the apostles, but to all the disciples, as representatives of the church universal, and includes in it all ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction.*

Since, therefore, this commission is regarded by *all* as the complete and final charter of the christian ministry, while many believe it to be the only one, we may well expect, that if, in that ministry, there are three essentially distinct orders, with their peculiar functions, and of such importance too as to be of 'the substance of the faith,' they will be very distinctly and unequivocally enumerated. Were an earthly monarch to issue a commission, for the appointment of officers in perpetuity, and for the discharge of specific and all-important duties; and were a certain portion of these officers, in after ages, to combine, by their own enactments, to invest themselves, as their peculiar prerogative, with some presidential authority, with which custom had temporarily endowed them; would not the other officers justly require the production of the original charter, that by its wording their claims might be either invalidated or confirmed? Most assuredly. In like manner, when a portion of the christian ministry now demand, as their exclusive preëminence and right, certain

1) See Ogilby on Lay Baptism, pp. 19, 20.

2) See Whateley on the Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 3.

3) Bp. Sparrow in the Anglican Fathers, vol. i. p. 334. Lond. 1841.

powers and functions; and when we are told that, by the institution of Christ, the very existence of the church depends on the perpetuation of these powers, in a lineal succession; we are fully justified in producing Christ's charter and commission, and demanding that we shall have pointed out to us these several orders, powers, and functions. And if, upon examination, this commission shall be found to address itself to all, who should, at any time, succeed to the office of the ministry, in the same words; and to delegate to them all the same duties; and this too under the same promise of divine coöperation; then may we feel assuredly confident, that in the christian ministry there is but one order, however, from the necessity of circumstances, the variety of talent, the difference of age or station, or the appointment to some official preëminence, variations may arise among them. All may be stars, while yet one star may differ from another in its lustre and glory.

The first question, therefore, that arises, in order to understand properly this commission, is, to whom was it originally addressed? To the apostles only, or to all the disciples, and through them, to the church universal, of which they were then the only representatives? Now this point may, we think, be clearly determined. By an appointment of our Lord himself, which was afterwards renewed through the ministry of an angel at the sepulchre, the apostles proceeded, some ten days after the resurrection, into Galilee, where it was promised they should see the Lord.[1] As they proceeded on their journey, they were joined by some others, who were also disciples of Christ.[2] On their arrival at Galilee their number, which cannot be precisely ascertained, was increased by the addition of some five hundred disciples gathered from within that country.[3] There, on some retired mountain, not improbably the very same on which he was transfigured,[4] and to which he customarily resorted, our Lord made his appearance not to the twelve merely, but, as bishop Horsley rightly affirms, 'to a promiscuous multitude of disciples.'[5]

This, therefore, was that assembled multitude, the representatives of his church and kingdom, and his witnesses unto men, to whom, when they had come together, our Lord revealed himself; with whom he conversed; whom he graciously blessed; to whom he gave his ascending commission; from whom he was parted; and who worshipped him.

1) Matt. 26 : 32, and 28 : 7.
2) Luke, 24 : 9, 33.
3) 1 Cor. 15 : 6.
4) See Dr. Whitby on Matt. 28 : 16, 17.
5) Sermons on the Resurrection, Sermon Second.

It cannot be believed, that there were none present, in that large multitude, but the apostles, to whom our Saviour addressed himself, and gave this commission. It was given evidently to his church. It is the fundamental institute for the full organization of his spiritual kingdom. By virtue of this commission, all who were led to feel his inward call, in a willingness to devote themselves to the work of the ministry, were authorized to do so. How they were to be inducted into their office, and by whose agency, and with what formalities, is another question, not necessary to the present discussion. This much is evident, that all power being given to Christ, in heaven and on earth, he now formally organized his church, and left with it this ministerial commission, for the perpetuation of an order of ministers clothed with full authority and power.[1]

In confirmation of the opinion that this commission, thus delivered to what may be considered the whole body of the church till the day of Pentecost,[2] and the representatives of that church for ever, we may adduce the tenor of the accompanying promise. This is so worded, as plainly to include not only the apostles but all the disciples, and to refer to some previously understood and explained meaning of Christ's words. Christ plainly addressed these words to that body, or kingdom, of which he had previously spoken as the church. Now when he directed his followers to 'hear the church,' (Matt. 18: 17.) Christ carefully abstains from any allusion to a class of supreme ecclesiastical judges by whom all cases were to be tried, but referred to 'the church,' in the familiar Jewish sense, as embracing equally its members and its officers, in which it was understood by his disciples, and employed by his contemporaries. When he would further describe what he understood by a church, he declares, that wherever 'two or three are gathered together in his name there would he be in the midst of them.' In exactly similar

1) See this confirmed by John Ferus, a friar of St. Francis's order, in his Comment. on Acts 11, in Sion's Roy. Prerog. p. 26; Gratian Caus. 11, p. 36; Gregory Epist. l. 4, ep. 8, 2; P. Æneas Silvius Digest. Conc. Basil. l. i.; Pope Auraclatus Dist. 21, c. in Nov. Test.; Sextus Sauensis Bib. Sanct. l. viii. Annot. 171; Thomas Aquinas, in 4 Sent. Dist. 2, 4, q. 3, Act 2; Alexander of Ales Sum Theol. Pt. iv. q. 20 me 5, 6; John Scott, in Magist Sent. l. iv. dist. 19, art. 1; Cent. 1, c. 4; Cent. 6, 7 col. 591. In Sion's Royal Prerog. p. 27. See also Zuinglius, Luther, and others, in ibid, p. 29; Grotius de Imperio, Sum Protest. c. 10, pp. 269, 279. This idea, which is fully announced by Tertullian, was perpetuated as late as the third century. See proofs in Neander's Hist. or the Chr. Rel. vol. i. pp. 200, 201, and Hist. of the Plant. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 7, &c.

2) Robert Hall's Wks. 8vo. Eng. ed. vol. ii. p. 38.

words, and with a similar meaning, when now about to leave this church, bodily, Christ renews this glorious assurance, saying, 'and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' The idea unquestionably is, that the church is still Christ's kingdom; that He would still be in the midst of it; and that, while absent in body, he would be far more really and gloriously present by his spiritual manifestations. Or as Luther, in his reply to the prior-general of the Dominicans, represents it, the church exists, virtually, in Christ alone.[1] The Saviour would appear to have studiously endeavored to signify, that he was looking on the disciples before him as the representatives of all future teachers and disciples, even to the end of the world.

The prelatical theory, on the contrary, goes on the presumption, that Christ has delivered over all his authority in the church below, to the order of prelates, to whom is given the plenitude of episcopal power. These, they tell us, are the vicars of Christ, the successors of the apostles, and the spiritual sovereigns of the church. Now the very notion of vicarious functions and authority supposes the absence of the principal, in whose name they are discharged, since it involves a contradiction, to suppose him to act in person, and by representatives, at the same time. Either, then, Christ is really absent from the church, or there is no vicarious order of spiritual trustees to whom is delegated his spiritual authority, since Christ, if present, must be supreme, and cannot share a joint prerogative with his own servants.[2] But Christ here anticipates, and for ever condemns this capital error of prelacy, which is, too, the very corner-stone of the papacy. The supreme Head of the church has here reserved to Himself alone, the prerogative to mediate and reign, to rule and govern, to legislate and bless, and to give efficiency and success, to his church. To his pastors, or under-shepherds, he has assigned no other duties than faithfully to teach and minister to his church, according to the truth and order of his heavenly word, and for the edification of that body. And while the church must necessarily appoint teachers, and these must govern and rule, and frame regulations for the wise conduct of affairs, and for the introduction of future ministers, yet is it here expressly declared, that Christ will be ever spiritually present, to give to his own chosen servants a heart fitted for the work; to his people guidance in their selection

1) Ego ecclesiam vertualiter non scio nisi in Christo. L. opp. lat. p. 174.

2) See Nolan's Catholic Char. of Christ. p. 143.

of officers, and to both his blessing in their mutual labors. These words, and consequently the whole commission, are addressed to the church. 'They cannot,' says Hadrian Saravia, 'be understood as referring to the apostles only, but to all; our Saviour bidding all be of good cheer, and promising to be with them. This promise cannot be disjoined from the precept preceding, and it consequently appears that Christ commanded his church to provide, that the gospel should be preached to unbelievers, after the departure of the apostles, according to the opportunities of time, place, and persons.'[1]

To assume that our Lord in these words spake to the apostles only, as the representatives of the pastors of the church, and not as the representatives of his disciples generally, is, to say the least, unwarranted, or as it appears to us much worse. And so thought bishop Pearson, for he has expounded the promise as one applying to the church at large, adopting, as he declares, the interpretation given to the passage by Leo and Augustine.[2] Such also was the undoubted opinion of Tertullian, Justin Martyr, and of Hilary, as defended by Rigaltius, of Grotius, Salmasius, Bingham, and others.[3]

Similar also is the general strain of the scripture promises and declarations concerning the church. Christ's giving 'some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers;' was 'for the perfecting of the saints' and 'for the edifying of the body of Christ.'[4] Presbyters are enjoined to 'feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.'[5] 'For all things,' says the apostle Paul, speaking of the church generally, 'are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, — all are yours; and ye are Christ's: and Christ is God's.'[6] Now in these passages it is expressly taught, that it was only for the benefit of the church Christ appointed teachers, conferred gifts upon them, and assigned to them their work. Many are the promises in the word of God to the same effect.[7]

The same conclusion is forced upon us by the conduct of

1) On the Priesthood, p. 162.

2) Goode's Div. Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. pp. 122, 123, Eng. ed. Pearson on the Creed, p. 512, and the quotations there.

3) Tract. de Exhort. Castif. c. 7. and de Pudicit, c. 21. Justin Martyr Dial. cum Trypho, § 116, 117. Hilary Comm. on Eph. 4: 11, 12. Grotius de Admin. Cænæ ubi pastores non sunt. Salmasius de Episcopis. Bingham, Eccl. Ant. B. 1, c. i. § 54. See all quoted in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 52–58.

4) Eph. 4: 8, 11, 12.

5) Acts 20: 28.

6) 1 Cor. 3: 21–23.

7) Isaiah 27: 3. 1 Cor. 3: 7. Matt. 16: 18. Eph. 2: 20, 21. 1 Cor. 6: 16. Rev. 2: 1. Isa. 4: 5, 6, and 32: 2. Isa. 40: 11. John, 10: 9, 11, 27–29. Isa. 9: 6, 7. Luke, 1: 32, 33. See McLean's Wks. vol. i. pp. 307, 308.

those who listened to this commission. 'The Acts of the Apostles' is a practical commentary upon this charter. Now from this we learn, that while the injunction to preach was given to the body, no individual acted upon it until, on the day of pentecost, he was endued with power from on high, and felt, in the gifts of the Spirit, the inward call and qualifications for the work. We also learn that on that day 'they were all with one accord in one place . . and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance,' 'and every man heard them speak in his own language.' (Acts 2: 1, 4, 6.) Here, also, we learn that when another individual was to be added to the apostolic college, the whole number of the 'brethren' 'gave forth their lots' as the voice of the church, 'and the lots fell on Mathias.' So also when the new order of officers — the deacons — were to be introduced into the church, then the twelve called the whole multitude of the disciples unto them and said, 'brethren look ye out among you seven men of honest report,' &c. Stephen, though not a prelate, and without any imposition of the hands of a prelate, exercised his gift of preaching, (Acts 6: 8 — 10. Phil. 8: 12.) Ananias and others aints, when dispersed by persecution, also preached[1] (Acts 9: 10, and 8: 4,) and baptized. It was by the men of Cyprus and Cyrene the christians at Antioch were first converted,[2] (v. 16.) Apollos, without ordination, preached at Alexandria, at Ephesus, and at Corinth, before he had seen either an apostle, an evangelist, or a presbyter.[3]

This, says Lord Barrington, was then a common thing for all that could do it, without any ordination whatsoever; teaching being a duty in all that had abilities and inclination . . . as things stood in the church before the canon of the New Testament was completed, and the church perfectly organized. And in this way does he suppose Paul and Barnabas to have preached for years before Paul was made an apostle.[4] All that received the Holy Ghost took that as a commission to exercise the gifts they had received in christian assemblies.[5] Neither was any one of the apostles

1) They are justified by Prof. Scholefield, in his Script. Grounds of Union, p. 85. And also by Cyprian, who distinctly acknowledges the fact, in Ep. 73, § 8, p. 237. Marshall's Ed. and Note. Also by Goode in Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 57, and by Erasmus, Ep. 59, in ibid. p. 55. and by all referred to, in preced.

2) Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 281, and Acts 11: 20, 21, 23, 24.

3) See Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Churches, p. 96, ch. ix.

4) See Wks. vol. ii. p. 252, et passim, and vol. i. pp. 119, 120.

5) Ibid. p. 253. Phil. 1: 12—18. See also Herschel's Reasons why I, a Jew, have become a Catholic, and not a R. Catholic, pp. 18, 19.

ever ordained by imposition of hands, except Paul, (Acts, 13: 1, &c.) who was thus consecrated as a pattern to all who should hereafter be called to the ministry.[1] If, then, the apostles and primitive christians to whom this commission was addressed, were at all competent to understand its reference, they certainly conceived that it was given to the church and not to the apostles.[2]

This conclusion is confirmed also by the very nature of the christian ministry, as it is universally regarded. For by his call and ordination, every minister is constituted primarily, a minister of the church universal, although he exercises this ministry over some particular charge. The office of the ministry has reference, first, to the universal or catholic church, so that he who is ordained, is empowered to perform any office of the ministry in any part of that church, to which God in his providence may call him; or to render temporary assistance to any other pastors, or to any people without a pastor, in the administration of ordinances, in preaching, or in the exercise of discipline. Secondly, this office has reference to the infidel world, or to the unconverted, and empowers every minister, wherever he has opportunity, to seek their conversion and introduction into the visible church. And thirdly, this office has reference to a particular church, empowering him who is called to a pastoral charge, to give to his people the ordinary exercise of his ministry, and so long as the relation continues, to confine to them his chief care and more stated labors; without, however, in any degree, affecting his *relation* to the church in general; his character of minister of the church catholic; his power to act, as such, wherever it may be necessary or proper; or his freedom to alter his relations whenever it shall appear to be his duty. The pastoral charge, therefore, arises from the necessary limitation in the ability and power of any one man and his incapacity to discharge the pastoral office to the whole church, and not from any original limitations in the powers of the ministry as an office. In short, the ministry is an office in the universal, and not in any particular church; and this commission, therefore, must be that of the church universal.

Nor does this view of this commission, want authority from 'the sacred fathers.' Tertullian shall speak for the primitive church, before transformed by the tawdry innovations of

1) See Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 273, and letters on the Fathers, by Misopapismus, (an Episcopalian,) p. 13, &c.

2) See D'Aubigne's Hist. of Ref, vol. i. p. 4. Eng. ed.

Cyprian 'the most glorious pope.'[1] According to archbishop Potter, 'he affirms that all christians were made priests by Christ, so that when three are gathered together, they make a church, though they be all laymen; and where no clergyman is present, laymen may baptize and celebrate the eucharist, THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLERGY AND LAITY BEING ONLY OF THE CHURCH'S APPOINTMENT.'[2] Similar is the judgment of Ignatius, who declares that 'where Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church,'[3] thus representing catholic unity, to depend not upon the communion or order of the bishop; but only upon Christ, who, though absent, was present in Spirit. Thus, also, the author of the commentaries, under St. Ambrose's name, in speaking on Eph. 4: 11, 12, is forced to admit, that in the beginning all preached, and baptized, and explained the scriptures. 'Tamen postquam in omnibus locis ecclesiæ sunt constitutæ, et officia ordinata, aliter composita res est quam cæperat. Primum enim omnes docebant, et omnes baptizabant, quibuscunque diebus vel temporibus fuisset occasio.' And again, 'ut ergo cresceret plebs et multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia, concessum est et evangelizare, et baptizare, et scripturas in ecclesia explanare.'[4] The same thing is also clearly established by the universal judgment of the fathers, that when Christ gave the keys and his glorious promises to Peter, it was only to him as the representative of the church. 'Petrus,' says Augustine, 'quando claves accepit ecclesiam sanctam significavit.'[5] 'In the beginning,' says Ambrosiaster, 'it was conceded to all, to preach, to baptize, to explain the scripture; afterward, offices were appointed, so that none of the clergy would dare to fill an office which he knew was not intrusted to him.'[6] Du Pin shows that the ancient fathers 'with an unanimous consent do teach that the keys were given TO THE WHOLE CHURCH, in the person of Peter.'[7] Tostatus bishop of Avila, says,[8] 'That

1) He is thus addressed in an epistle from Rome. See his Wks. Ep.

2) Potter, on Ch. Govt. ch. iv. p. 168. Eng. ed. Tert. Exh. Cast. c. 7. See Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ, p. 100, and Hickes ibid.

3) Ep. ad Smyrn. c. 7. and Nolan's Cath. Char. p. 97.

4) St. Ambros, Opp. tom. iii. p. 617, ed. Paris, 1586, in Thorndike, p. 95.

5) Expositio in Evang. Johan. Tract. 50 decap. 12. tom. ix. p. 152. Paris, 1635. S. Leonis Magni Serm. iii. p. 53. ed. Lugdun. 1700, and Thorndike, pp. 139, 137, and p. 198, who is clearly of opinion, that all jurisdiction was originally given, in effect, to lay persons.

6) Cap. 5. Epist. ad Ephes. in Dr. Elliott on Romanism, vol. i. p. 472.

7) See Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 485, part vii. c. 1, Eng. ed. See also, these testimonies given by Dr. Pusey, in Library of the Fathers, vol. x. p. 498. See also numerous testimonies, in confirmation of the same point, adduced by Claude, in his Def. of the Reform. ii. 248, &c.

8) In Numer. cap 15, quest. 48 and 49. In Claude ii. 254.

although the acts of jurisdiction cannot be exercised by the whole community, yet that jurisdiction belongs to the whole community in regard of its origin and efficacy, because the magistrates receive their jurisdiction from it.' He adds, afterwards, 'that it is the same in the keys of the church, that Jesus Christ gave them to the whole church in the person of St. Peter. And that it is the church that communicates them to the prelates, but which, notwithstanding, communicates them without depriving itself of them; so that the church has them, and the prelates have them, but in a different manner; for the church has them in respect of origin and virtue, and the prelates have them only in respect of use; the church has them virtually, because she can give them to a prelate by election, and she has them originally also. For the power of a prelate does not take its origin from itself, but from the church, by means of the election that it makes of him. The church that chose him gives him that jurisdiction, but as for the church, it receives it from nobody after its having once received it from Jesus Christ. The church, therefore, has the keys originally and virtually, and whenever she gives them to a prelate, she does not give them to him after the manner that she has them, to wit, originally and virtually, but she gives them to him only as to use.'

But we need not further delay, in proving what the conduct of the church in every age attests, that she regarded herself as receiving this commission in trust for the honor of Christ, the welfare of his body, and the perpetuity of his laws. How she has abused this trust, by making it subservient to the interests of the hierarchy, to the misery and ruin of Christ's 'royal priesthood,' eternity will fearfully disclose, and history, in its measure, now declares.

This commission, then, being, as we have seen, addressed to the church, as then represented by the five hundred brethren, including among them the twelve apostles, and probably also, the seventy disciples as representatives of the future ministry, it follows that the radical power of the ministry, as an instrumental agency, is in the church of God, and that the church does not receive her being, or her power, or her blessing *from the ministry*, but from *Christ*, by the continuous agency of this ministry.[1] It was 'unto this catholic visible church, Christ gave the ministry.'[2] 'The whole church visible,' says Hooker, 'was the true original subject of all power.'[3] 'God,' says Bucer, 'gave the power of ordination

1) See Thorndike, on Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 198.

2) Confession of Faith, ch. 25.

3) Eccl. Pol. B. vii. p. 37.

to the church (*simpliciter*) and not to individuals, and the presbytery are but the servants of the church.[1] Christ gave the extraordinay officers, for the establishment of His church, and the ordinary ministers, for its perfection, and edification when organized and formed.[2] 'We lay it down,' to use the words of Dr. Rice, 'as a fundamental principle in our system of polity, that ecclesiastical power is by the Lord Jesus Christ VESTED IN THE CHURCH; it BELONGS to the BODY OF THE FAITHFUL PEOPLE.'[3] And hence it follows, that should any interruption or removal of the true and lawful ministry take place, God's church and people are in such a case, thrown back upon their original rights; and are empowered, by authority of this commission, to call any individuals, whom Christ has gifted, to officiate in the church; until, in this way, a gospel ministry is again instituted, and the church permanently officered and organized. In such a case as this, the church has power to set up the ministry and to restore it, according to Christ's own institution; and the inward call of God, enlarging, stirring up and assisting the heart, together with the good will and assent of a people whom God makes willing to receive him, can fully authorize and consecrate any man to the ministerial office. The whole office, authority, and functions of the ministry, rest, therefore, upon this charter. These cannot be originated or imparted by man. Neither bishops nor presbyters can convey them. If they could, then ministers would be commissioned by them; would derive all their authority from them; and ought, therefore, to preach and baptize in their name. But who would listen to such man-made ministers, or receive ordinances at their hands? Men ordain, but they cannot call to the ministry; or qualify for it; or impart spiritual gifts; or authoritatively empower others to preach the gospel. All that men can do, is to designate those who give evidence of *having been* called and commissioned by God, and to give them, by imposition of hands, a public investiture with office, an introduction to the confidence and obedience of the church. They recognize certain individuals as possessing the authority conveyed by this commission, and ministerially impart power *coram ecclesia*, to those who had already received it *coram deo*.[4] Ordination by man, is only, therefore, a *ministerial investiture* with office, and a positive institution, for order's sake, to prevent the intrusion of unqualified persons into the

1) In Brooke on Episc. p. 74.
2) Eph. 4: 11—13.
3) Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 535. Again, pp. 536, 538, the power belongs to the people, the exercise of it to the officers. See also Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 38. p. 221.
4) See chap. iii. § 2.

sacred office.[1] And thus supposing the reformers to have received no ordination, which, however, was not the case, they were, nevertheless, fully empowered by this divine charter — ever ancient in the eternal nature of the truths it contains, and the rights it bestows, and ever new in the regenerative influence it promises and secures — and the inward call of heaven, to preach the gospel in its purity: to refute the popish errors; to recover men from the grasp of the destroyer; to constitute churches; to institute a regular ministry; to edify the church; to propogate the truth; to purge ecclesiastical discipline from abuses; and to restore to the church its primitive and scriptural polity.[2] The visible church being then in a state of rebellion against its only lawful king; the pope and his vassals having traitorously conspired against their sovereign; the laws, and canons, and customs of man having usurped the place of Christ's divine institutes; and all nations having been either deluded or forced into this conspiracy; it was the sacred and patriotic duty of all true liegemen, to rally round the standard of their prince, to unfurl the banner of His truth, to proclaim Christ's sole supremacy, and to restore his kingdom to its rightful government.[3] It was in this spirit these martyred fathers regarded their previous ordination as valid, not because they had been consecrated by prelates of the church of Rome, but because they had received their authority from Jesus Christ and his apostles, by virtue of this immutable charter.[4] They believed, that the institution of the ministry was preserved to the church, not by any succession of individuals, nor by any transmission of authority from man to man, but by the perpetuity of this original commission: and that, however many may have been unduly appointed under it, and have unrighteously usurped unsanctioned power, the institution was still preserved in all its authority.[5] Let, then, prelates know that the church is not dependent upon them, but they upon the church; and that the church was never abandoned by its divine author to the management of any vicars apostolic, but

1) See Claude's Def. of the Ref. vol. ii. p. 240, &c.

2) See the very able defence of their views, as given by Claude in his Def. of the Ref. part iv. ch. 3, vol. ii. p. 233. See also, pp. 240, 242, 243, 247, 262, where he shows that they never can be deprived of this right.

3) See Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 36.

4) A very full exhibition of their sentiments may be seen in Henderson's Review and Consideration. Edinb. 1706, pp. 252—269, and 293, 294, &c., and Whateley's King. of Christ, Essay ii § 36, 38.

5) See Dr. Hawkins, on the Apost. Succ. p. 8.

is under the continual governance of her ever-living Head. And let them be rebuked for their anti-christian doctrine, which would make the truth and the power of God to depend upon their succession of prelates; and which equally degrades the two divine agents, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and the only divine instrument, the Word of God.[1] 'It has been said,' says Luther,[2] 'that the pope, the bishops, the priests, and those who dwell in convents, form the spiritual or ecclesiastical state; and that the princes, nobles, citizens, and peasants, form the secular state or laity. This is a fine story, truly. Let no one, however, be alarmed at it. *All* christians belong to the spiritual state; and there is no other difference between them, than that of the functions they discharge. * * * * * If any pious laymen were banished to a desert, and having no regularly consecrated priest among them, were to agree to choose for that office one of their number, married or unmarried, this man would be as truly a priest as if he had been consecrated by all the bishops in the world. Augustine, Ambrose, and Cyprian, were chosen in this manner. Hence it follows, that laity and priests, princes and bishops, or, as they say, the clergy and the laity, have, in reality, nothing to distinguish them but their *functions*. They all belong to the same estate; but all have not the same work to perform,' &c.

Having, therefore, as we hope, satisfactorily proved that this commission was originally given to the church generally, and not to the apostles individually, the next inquiry is, to what duties does it commission those, who, in the name and by the authority of the church, officiate as its ministers? And to this inquiry, ready answer may be given. All who act under this charter, are empowered, in the first place, to preach the gospel; secondly, to administer the sacraments, of which baptism is the initiating rite; and, thirdly, to exercise all that authority, jurisdiction, and discipline, necessary for maintaining the purity, spirituality, and perpetuity of the church.

That this commission includes, also, necessarily, the power of ordination, is insisted on by our opponents themselves. Thus Nelson, on Festivals and Fasts, says, 'in this commission is plainly contained the authority of ordaining others, and a power to transfer that commission upon others, and

1) See Prof. Scholefield's Scrip. Grounds of Union, Cambridge, 1841, and the authorities there quoted. See also p. 85. See this view firmly and fully presented in 'The Institution of a Christian Man,' in Formularies of Faith, in Reign of Henry VIII, p. 106.

2) Opp. l. xvii. f. 457, et Seq.

those upon others, to the end of the world. And to show that it was not merely personal to the apostles, our Saviour promises to be with them and their successors, in the execution of this commission, even unto the end of the world.'[1]

§ 5. *General inferences as to the nature, extent, and designed effect of this commission.*

Before leaving this part of our subject, it is necessary to call attention to some additional considerations. The first is, that while this commission was addressed primarily to the church, in its universal character, and not to the apostles or ministers, it nevertheless as plainly and certainly implies the appointment and authority of an order of teachers. All were not to teach, otherwise there would have remained none to be taught; nor all to administer sacraments, or govern, else how could there be either ordinances or government? It is, therefore, obvious, as many other parts of scripture declare, that the existence of officers for the instruction and management of the church, was as much a part of the design of our Lord, as the institution of the church itself.[2] The second remark is, that the great end and object contemplated in the appointment of these officers, was the proclamation of the gospel. The preaching of the gospel, and the inculcation of its truths upon those who have professed to be its disciples, is the burden of this commission.[3] St. Paul says he was sent to preach, not to baptize,[4] that is, even the administration of sacraments was but subsidiary to the great object, the sanctification of men's hearts through the truth. And he further assures us, that even his power and authority was given to him, not for the destruction, but for the edification of the church.[5] The christian ministry is, therefore, consecrated to the instruction, persuasion, and conversion of men. Like prophecy, its very spirit and power consists in bearing testimony to Jesus. It is the pillar and ground of the truth. Like John the baptist, it is designed to bear witness of THE LIGHT. The testimony which it bears, respecting the person of Christ, as the Son of God; the mission of Christ, as the anointed prophet, priest, and king; and the work of Christ, in his life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension; comprises all that is ultimately valuable in the work of the ministry. This is its glorious high calling, by which it is made the

1) See in Oxf. Tr. vol. iii. p. 155.
2) See the Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry.
3) Matt. 28: 18, 19.
4) 1 Cor. 1: 17.
5) 2 Cor. 10: 8.

power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation.[1] Our third remark, is, that there is no foundation for the distinction, upon which prelatists build, between *the power of order* including confirmation, ordination, and the admission and exclusion of members; and *the power of jurisdiction or government*, including the cognizance of causes, the decision of questions on points of faith, and the granting of indulgences.[2] There is not a shadow of support, for these distinctions in the charter before us. The ground and reason of the commission are rested upon the power and dominion of Christ. It is because Christ has all power in heaven and on earth; his ministers are *therefore* to go forth and publish his salvation; to make known to men the nature and extent of that power, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. And in performing this work, Christ here empowers them to take all proper measures, investing them with a plenitude of authority, and comprehending under one and the same commission, the right to teach, and to govern. Our fourth remark, is, that while this is so, there is a definite limit here fixed to the exercise of this authority. The extent to which this grant of spiritual authority reached, is defined with marked and peculiar emphasis. The power of the christian ministry is bounded by the commandments, or revealed word of God. These constitute the limit beyond which it cannot pass, and up to which it is required to come. Ministers are to be restrained, not by the cunningly devised fables of ecclesiastical traditions, customs, and canons, but by what the Lord, in his inspired word has commanded. A 'thus saith the Lord,' can alone make any doctrine, rite, or ceremony, a divine institution, or a term of communion with the church universal. He who believeth whatsoever Christ has commanded, will be saved, and is to be admitted into his visible church. And in like manner, the ministers of Christ are under an equally imperative obligation to teach all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, and nothing more, having authority neither to add to, or to take from, the instituted laws of Christ's house. It is in subordination, in humble and devout subordination to the divine word itself, the church has received its sacred commission.[3]

All power and authority being thus in the hands of Christ, he has undoubted right to the obedience of all his people.

1) See M'Lean's Wks. vol. i. part 1, p. 35.
2) See Dr. Elliot on Romanism. vol. i. p. 459.
3) Hampden's Inaug. Lect. before the Univ. of Oxford, Lond. 1836. ed. 4, p. 19.

And since this commission is addressed primarily to the church, it is, therefore, the duty of every member of it, to inquire whether he may not be called to enter upon the work of the ministry by a course of preparation. This authority being supreme, must also, of necessity, set aside all adverse authority, that would, in any way, oppose or alter the execution of this commission. No power, of any body, under any circumstances, can be of force sufficient to gainsay or resist this. And thus, when the early heralds of the cross were prohibited from preaching, by the authority of the existing hierarchy, they boldly disclaimed their authority, saying, 'whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye.' And again, 'we ought to obey God rather than men.' Nor is this all: for since the power here claimed by Christ is absolute and complete, it must not only exclude all adverse or rival, but also all conjunct authority. Christ alone is king, and head, and governor, and legislator, to his church. All arbitrary, self-originated, or independent power in the ministers of Christ, is expressly forbidden. Even the apostles, in executing this commission, had no authority to teach the nations any other doctrine than what they had received from Christ; nor to baptize any in their own name, but only in His: neither were they to teach the disciples their own laws, but 'to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them.' It remains to observe, that by the same rule, all discretionary power to make the least alteration either in Christ's doctrine or ordinances, is here forbidden. The apostles, although inspired by the Holy Spirit, were not at liberty to proclaim any truth as a doctrine of Christ, or any rite as an instituted order of Christ's kingdom, unless specially instructed so to do, by this divine guidance. And every addition or alteration to the doctrine or discipline of Christ's kingdom, introduced since their day, by the authority of the church, is an open denial of the truth, that all authority is resident in Christ only, and that the church has no other office or duty than 'to teach whatsoever he has commanded.'[1] Lastly, it is to be observed, that whatever authority and power, beyond that which characterized the apostles, in their extraordinary office, is here *granted* to any, is as certainly granted to all the ministers of Christ. For the promise here annexed is evidently addressed to persons, and must apply to all succeeding ministers to the end of the world who shall faithfully prosecute their work, in accordance

1) See these views presented in M'Lean's Wks. vol. i. p. 6, &c.

with these instructions, and in subserviency to these limitations. All, therefore, who are called to the work of teaching in the church by the inward call of Christ's spirit, and by the outward call of those who are appointed to this duty by the church, are clothed with all the power here secured by Christ to his church, for the work of the ministry and the edification of the body of Christ.

§ 6. *This commission applies to presbyters and not to prelates.*

The all-important question then is, whether this commission applies to presbyters, or to prelates, presbyters, and deacons, as the triumvirate orders of the christian ministry, since it is an admitted canon that 'no constitutional principle can be modified except by the party that ordained it.'[1] And since it is not pretended that Christ issued any later, or more full commission for the christian ministry, is there, we ask, any authority to be found in this, for dividing that ministry into three orders, as essentially distinct from one another as the several castes of India. 'Every office,' says archbishop Potter, 'implies power. . . . . And as there are these three distinct offices so must there be distinct powers appropriated to every one of them, for as the notion of an office implies power, so distinct offices do necessarily imply distinct powers.'[2] It follows, therefore, that for these orders, and their distinct powers, there must be special commissions, or special provisions in the same commission. It is not to be imagined that they can be so completely distinct, and at the same time so essential and so evidently revealed, and yet all equally authorized by one and the same commission, which makes no difference, but addresses itself to all, and prescribes to all one and the same functions of teaching and governing the church. Let it not be said that presbyters and deacons were afterwards introduced. To this we reply, that whereas an order of deacons were afterwards appointed by special divine direction, their duties and qualifications were also very carefully prescribed. And so also are those of bishops or presbyters, the teaching order in the church. But nowhere have we any such delineation of either the character, work, or qualifications of prelates, the most essential order of the three prelatical castes. Neither let it be said, that while other ministers besides the apostles were included

1) Professor Ogilby on Lay Baptism, pp. 31 and 20.

2) On Ch. Govt. p. 197.

under this commission, that nevertheless the apostles were distinguished as the first order by their preëminent endowments. This will not serve the cause of prelacy, or prove the existence of three orders in the ministry. It is undoubtedly true that to the twelve, whom our Lord had selected as his witnesses, many wonderful gifts, not enjoyed by any since their death, were bestowed — the gifts, for instance, of inspiration, of tongues, of miracles, of knowledge, of discerning spirits, of extraordinary boldness, the authoritative determination of all questions of faith and practice, and, above all, the exclusive power of conferring these gifts on others.[1] The apostles were, as we have seen, Christ's representatives and ambassadors, so that their doctrine, being divinely communicated, has been inwrought with that of Christ himself, into the very foundation of our faith. Such gifts constituted one feature of the opening dispensation of the gospel and supplied the want of established rules and ordinary privileges. They were, therefore, granted to all the first heralds of the cross, and to many also of the primitive converts.[2] Such was the dispensation of the all-wise Head of the church, who having all power, made every thing conspire to promote its establishment, progress, perpetuity, and glory. It was fully competent for Him who commissioned his ministers, to make what distinctions among them he pleased, granting to them severally his spiritual gifts according to his sovereign will. And while there was but one office of the ministry, and one end to be attained by it, and one Spirit by which it was made effectual to that end, we can see the wisdom of Christ in fitting out his servants with those qualifications which the existing necessities of the church required. Accordingly, we find that in the age of inspiration, when the foundations of the church were being laid, the ministers of Christ were supplied with various kinds of extraordinary endowments and in various degrees. Thus do we read of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and others. 'Now,' says the apostle, 'there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are differences of administration (or different modes in which the work of the ministry is carried on) but the same Lord, (by whom they are all equally appointed and from whom their several powers are received.) And there are diversities of operations, (or effects produced,) but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation

1) See Lord Barrington's Essay on the Apostles, in Wks. vol. ii.

2) It would appear that they were generally bestowed on all the members of the Corinthian church.

of the Spirit (in these several varieties) is given to every man (for no other purpose and in no other degree than as may best) profit (and edify the whole body of) the church.' (1 Cor. 12: 4—7.) The apostle proceeds to exemplify these principles, by an enumeration of the various gifts then commonly bestowed. Now as all these various 'ministers' received their peculiar character from their peculiar powers, and were distinguished not in the end aimed at, but in the manner in which its attainment was pursued, it follows, that since these gifts were extraordinary and are not promised in continuance to the church, these differing administrations were also designed to cease and merge into one common ministry. Such orders cannot be succeeded by any permanent officers in the church, in what thus distinguished them as orders; but they may all be succeeded in that ministry which was common to them all; for whose accomplishment they were variously endowed; and in which they were known as stewards, ministers, presbyters, and bishops. We are therefore taught, as we have seen, by the apostle Paul, that the very purpose for which the ascended Saviour gave some to be apostles, and some to be evangelists, and some to be prophets, furnished with miraculous powers adapted to their extraordinary offices, was that they might prepare christians for the ordinary ministry of pastors or teachers, who were to be the standing ministry, to preside over and instruct the church. By their means, in fact, the regular and permanent ministry of the church was to be instituted, and the church led on from its infant state, to a full, organized maturity.[1]

In a word, there is confessedly but this one commission given by our Lord. All, therefore, who are truly ministers of Christ, are so by virtue of this commission; and since it addresses itself but to one general class, and conveys one general power, of course all who are commissioned by it, have a full, and equal right to all the authority it contains. If, therefore, this commission does not extend to presbyters, then, of necessity, presbyters are not ministers of Christ at all, and can have no authority from Him; but since they are undeniably ministers, they must be possessed of all the authority conveyed by this commission. For, to use the language of Wickliffe, 'the power of priesthood is a matter which does not exist in degree, either more or less.'

That presbyters constitute a certain and divinely instituted

1) Eph. 4: 11—14. See Doddridge in loco. and chap. i. p. 33.

class of ministers, is universally admitted. We read of their ordination in every city. They are identified with bishops, and we find full directions given as to their qualifications.[1] We are also certain, as we shall have occasion to show, that they preached and took the oversight of churches, and thus discharged a part, at least, of the duties here prescribed. The claim, therefore, of the presbyterate to divine right and institution, is beyond controversy.

But it is also true that they are included in this commission. These words of Christ, and the other passages which are adduced by Romanists, to establish the supremacy of Peter, are shown by the fathers to have been intended for all other apostles and pastors, and to be equally addressed to all the ministers of Christ.[2] The most prevalent opinion in the Romish church, is, that the episcopate is not a distinct order from the presbyterate, but a mere extension of it. To this class belong the master of the Sentences, Bonaventura, Thomas Aquinas, Pope Cornelius, Gregory the Great, Alcuin, and the Council of Trent, &c.[3] The term priesthood, is considered by them as generic, embracing under it all grades of priests, even archbishops.[4] The functions of the priest, they regard as embracing the administration of the sacraments, and celebration of mass; blessing both persons and things; presiding over, and governing the people and inferior clergy, of course under control of the bishop; preaching; and remitting or retaining sins in the sacrament of penance.[5] 'And hence it is,' says Bishop Beveridge,[6] 'that, according to the practice of the apostolic and catholic church, though not in that of deacons, yet in the ordination of priests, as you will see presently, the bishop, when he lays his hand severally upon every one that receives that order, saith, 'Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.' 'Where we may observe, that although some other words are inserted to determine and distinguish the office committed to them, yet all the same words are repeated which our Lord himself used at the ordination of

1) Acts 14: 23. Tit. 1: 5, &c.

2) See in Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. part vii. ch. 1, p. 488, and references.

3) See Elliott on Romanism, vol. i. pp. 451, 452, 453, 457, 458. See also, Saravia; 'There be,' says he, 'but one Gospel ministry under Christ, as there was but one priesthood under Moses.' On the priesthood, pp. 117, 145.

4) Ibid, p. 457.

5) Ibid, p. 458.

6) Wks. vol. ii. p. 123.

his apostles; which the catholic church always judged necessary, not only in imitation of our blessed Saviour, but likewise because that the persons, who are ordained priests in his church, are to preach the same word, administer the same sacraments, and exercise the same power in the censures of the church, as the apostles themselves did. And, therefore, it is necessary that they should be endued with the same spirit, ordained after the same manner, and intrusted with the same powers of the keys, as the apostles themselves were.'

To this judgment of the universal church, is to be added that of the English church. This commission of our Lord, was embodied in the form of ordination for presbyters, in the days of Edward VI, where it remained until the year 1662, when the convocation, for the first time, introduced distinct forms for the ordination of bishops and presbyters. Now, either prelatists derive the order and functions of presbyters from this commission, or they do not. If they do, then must presbyters have a right to all the powers contained in it. It knows of no restriction, or subdivision, or parcelling out of its prerogatives. It includes, also, we have seen, the powers of ordination and jurisdiction.[1] But if presbyters are ministers of Christ, and must be such by virtue of this commission, then is it as certain that they are entitled to all the privileges conveyed by this commission, and to this right of ordination and government among the rest. There is no clause of restriction, either in this commission, or elsewhere, by which all its powers are lodged primarily in the hands of one order, and through them, in part, communicated to two others. The scriptures know of no such officer as a presbyter, with half the powers of the ministry, and a deacon with one third; and both in vassalage to a prelate. Such officers are no scripture ministers at all, and these orders, as they exist in the prelacy, are either of human institution, or they are presbyter bishops, arbitrarily deprived of the just exercise of their original and inherent rights. On the other hand, do prelatists maintain that presbyters are not authorized by this commission; then we ask them to produce some other commission for the office of presbyters, as an inferior order to bishops, from any part of the canonical scriptures. Such commission is, they fully and strongly affirm, absolutely necessary to any order claiming to be of divine right. But no such charter has ever been produced. A new one, therefore, has been framed, differing

1) See Nelson on Fest. and Fasts, in Oxf. Tr. vol. iii. p. 155.

at different times, according to the superstitious views of the church, framed in words which are not only not in Scripture, but in violent opposition to it, professing to give the Holy Ghost, by the imposition of hands, and this too, absolutely, and in all cases, even though the minister may be a Simon Magus, and the recipient a Judas.[1] The office of presbyter, and *a fortiori* of preaching deacons, is thus, according to prelatists, without any divine commission. But as they themselves assert, that they are, nevertheless, of divine institution, we are forced to the conclusion, that the order of presbyters, alone, is sanctioned by this ministerial charter.[2]

If this position has been sustained to the satisfaction of the reader, then is it altogether unnecessary to delay, in proving that prelates, as a superior order to this established rank of ministers, cannot be included under this commission. If, as bishop Heber affirms, prelates 'have a commission derived from the apostles to preach the gospel different from' presbyters,[3] they are called upon to produce it, since there can be no distinct offices without distinct powers, which must be appropriated by distinct and undeniable commission.[4] Now most assuredly such authority cannot be found in this last commission of Christ, which is the only full and final charter of the ministry in all ages, even to the end of the world. Neither is such a warrant to be discovered in any subsequent directions for the appointment of ministers. No passage can be shown in all the New Testament, in which it is said that some are to be ordained to the first order as prelates; and some to the second, as presbyters only; and some to the third, as deacons. When Paul describes the office of a bishop, he does no more than enlarge upon this commission given by our Saviour. And since the office described by Paul, is confessedly that of the presbyterate, this order, and this alone, must be that referred to by Christ.

At the hazard of being tedious, we would corroborate our position, by a reference to the contradictory absurdities to which this prelatic theory leads. Thus, we are told by archbishop Potter,[5] that the plenitude of the apostolic power was given at three different times, and that at each time, the apostles were commissioned to preach and to baptize.[6] This is

1) See the Form, 'Receive thou the Holy Ghost,' &c. in Book of Common Prayer, and the Romish ordinals.

2) See Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. pp. 391, 392.

3) Sermons in England, p. 218.

4) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 197.

5) On Ch. Govt. p. 58.

6) Preaching he regards as the highest function. See pp. 203, 204.

the comprehension of their duties, for discharging which, they were miraculously endowed. There is not a syllable in any or all of these alleged commissions, even on the archbishop's interpretation, about dioceses, or government of presbyters, or imposition of hands, or the transmission of the sacred gift to an endless succession. Let us, then, pass on to the second order, and what is represented to be their especial function, by which they are distinguished from the first? Why it is their duty, we are told, to preach and to administer the sacraments; that is, to do just what the apostles, by their three commissions, were empowered to do, while the great modern function of presbyters, that is, an implicit obedience and submission to the prelatic order, is never once even hinted at. But our amazement increases, when we pass on to the third order of deacons. 'These,' says Potter, 'are inferior ministers,'[1] while, as Mr. Palmer teaches, they are not a spiritual order at all.[2] But what are the distinct powers of this inferior order, subordinating them to the two higher? 'They are,' says Potter, 'attendants and ministers, to preach the gospel and to baptize,' which offices they have executed 'since our Lord's ascension.'[3] Now these are the identical functions, represented by this same author, as the peculiar and exclusive powers of the apostles, and of the presbyters. He assures us, that 'the principal business' of the apostles was 'to preach.'[4] They were also to baptize. What are we then to think, when we now learn that 'baptizing is an inferior ministry,' 'deputed' by the first order 'to those whose proper business it was to baptize.'[5]

We put it to any reasonable mind, whether it is possible to believe that Christ, by divine inspiration, instituted in his church three orders of ministers, essentially distinct in their nature, offices, and gifts, and essential to the very being and perpetuity of the church, and that, after all, he has declared, that those are the ordinary and principal duties of the first order, which he has made the duties of the second, and also of the third; and that he has, at the same time, left altogether unmentioned, those prerogatives by which the first are now said to be characterized by divine right? And more than this, can any man believe, that when Christ thus commissioned these three orders, the same duties, when enjoined upon the second and third orders, are *inferior*, which, when performed by the first order, constitute 'their *principal* busi-

1) Ibid, p. 67.
2) On the Ch. vol. ii.
3) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 58.
4) Ibid, p. 68.
5) Ibid, pp. 67, 68.

ness?' And further still, that the ministry of baptism, which is deputed to an inferior order, and that not a spiritual one, should, nevertheless, be the most vital and efficacious ordinance the church has to dispense, since all its recipients are assured that thereby they are born again, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, justified, and made christians? Can any sane mind believe all these contradictory declarations, to be verily and in truth the simple and pure doctrine and institution of God? It is impossible. And when, in addition to all this, we remember, that in the Romish church there are now eight, nine, or ten orders, all claiming the sanction of this divine commission;[1] that in the single order of presbyters, there are ten subdivided orders;[2] and under that of bishops seven orders more;[3] how can we avoid regarding the whole theory as the offspring of human vanity, begot upon pride and ambition?

This commission determines of itself the whole controversy. Ministers do not receive their office or power from the ordainer, but immediately and solely from Christ. The ordainers can do nothing more than designate the *person* as qualified to fill the office; and *ministerially*, as the servants of Christ, deliver to him the possession of office and authority by a solemn rite or sign. The office, however, and the power, are fixed, certain, immutable, and of divine institution. And it is not in the power of any church, or of the whole church, to alter that institution, or to say that to one order of men this power shall be given in its plenitude, and to other orders it shall be given only in part; nor can any pretended rules or canons affect that right and title, which descends, by divine gift, to every duly commissioned minister of Jesus Christ.

That such was the understanding of our Lord's commission, by those to whom it was originally given, is made evident to us, by the organization of the church in Jerusalem, as constituted by these same apostles, and, as we must believe, under the immediate guidance of Christ himself. For we are informed, that the whole number of the apostles continued, for some twelve years, even after churches had been established elsewhere, (see Acts 8:1, 25,) to govern this church with equal power, having other presbyters associated with them, who sat and acted with them, (see Acts 15:) as coequal members of the ecclesiastical senate.[4] They thus gave us, under

1) Elliott on Roman. p. 451.
2) Ibid, p. 459.
3) Ibid, p. 460.
4) See this admitted by Potter, on Ch. Govt. c. 3, p. 107, Eng. ed.; Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 61, Eng. ed.

their own hand, and by direct inspiration, a model or platform for the government of all other churches. Of this body, Peter probably acted as moderator or president, until after their dispersion, when James appears to have acted in this capacity. Now it is a fundamental maxim in prelacy, that there can be but one prelate in any one church or city at one time.[1] The apostles, therefore, while in their extraordinary endowments they were superior to all presbyters, were, in their ordinary ministerial character, presbyters, and acted as such in the constitution of the first and mother church of all that should ever arise. They have thus put this matter beyond controversy, with all reasonable minds, and proved that this commission of Christ authorizes only one order, as permanent ministers in Christ's church; that this is the order of presbyters; and that the whole power and authority flowing from this charter, both as it regards teaching, governing, and ordaining, is vested in this divinely constituted order.[2] And thus have we given a demonstration, as far as the subject is capable of it, that the government of the church, as instituted by Christ, and as understood by his apostles, was not monarchical like prelacy, nor democratical, like pure congregationalism, but republican, like presbytery; and that presbyters are the true and only valid successors to the apostles in the ordinary ministry of the gospel. And if prelatists will plead for any subsequent alteration of this divine model, we hope they will make the matter of fact and the warrant for such alteration, as plain and clear as this first institution itself.[3] We contend for that form and order which was undoubtedly the original institution of our Saviour; while prelatists contend for that which was, they say, the result of a subsequent change, for which they can, at best, give no more than probable reasons. And who is most likely to be on the Lord's side in this controversy, may therefore easily appear to any one who seeks the truth.

1) See authorities given in Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part 2, p. 33, &c.

2) See Peirce, ibid, p. 42.

3) See ibid, p. 44.

# CHAPTER IV.

THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION SUSTAINED BY AN APPEAL TO THE APOSTOLIC AGE OF THE CHURCH.

§ 1. *The powers and titles attributed to the ministry by the apostles.*

'It is evident to all men,' says the prelatic church, diligently reading the holy scriptures and ancient authors, 'that there have been, from the apostles' time, three orders of ministers in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons.' Now for these three orders we have diligently but fruitlessly inquired in the order of the church during our Lord's ministry, and as he left it when he ascended up far above all heavens, having given to it that broad charter and commission by which it is to be guided to the end of time. There was but one order of ministers, with perfectly similar functions, appointed by our Lord during the period of his own ministration; and when he had solemnly instituted the christian church and inaugurated the christian ministry, he commissioned but one order, in perpetuity. It remains, therefore, to inquire whether there is any sufficient evidence to be found for these three orders in the subsequent organization and extension of the christian church. We have in the New Testament, an inspired record of the apostolic procedure in the propagation of christianity, with twenty-one epistles addressed to particular churches; to the churches generally; to ministers; and to christians. We may well, therefore, and reasonably expect, that, with diligent search, it will be made plain to us, that these three orders, of bishops, priests, and deacons, were instituted by the apostles in all the early churches; that where they were not already found, they were speedily consecrated; and that full directions are given by which their separate

spheres of duty and proprieties of office may be clearly designated, and the present unhappy divisions of the visible church, on this account, be effectually healed.

But is there any such revelation made to us in the book of the Lord — in these apostolic canons? That numerous churches were organized in various countries, and under divine guidance, we are there informed. That the apostles, and other extraordinary officers, who were supernaturally endowed, and therefore of a temporary order, were employed in laying the foundations deep and wide, of that building which will only be completed when the last ransomed sinner shall be added as a top-stone, with shoutings of grace, grace unto it; of this, also, we have there distinct information. That an order of ministers, according to Christ's commission, was set up in every place, when the Lord opened up the way by the conversion of sinners, and that to them were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to be handed down in perpetuity to all their successors; this, also, is not left ambiguous to any diligent inquirer. But that these several keys, in the full plenitude of episcopal authority, were, solemnly and by divine inspiration, given to one of three distinct orders, to whom was delegated the exclusive authority to use them, and to grant them *in partibus* to other two orders subordinate to their own, or that this order was to transmit in an unbroken, lineal succession, this sacred and mysterious gift; all this, with whatever diligence we examine, we find not written in the Book of the Lord.

That the ministers of the church are, in the New Testament, called bishops, *επισκοποι*, in reference to their duty of taking oversight, is undoubted, and this term is certainly to be retained and had in reverence, as an official designation of those who are over the churches in the Lord, and who are to be very highly esteemed, honored, and loved for their work's sake. And thus are our ministers denominated bishops, throughout our standards. But these same ministers are also called by the name of presbyters, in the New Testament, in reference to their authority, seniority, and preëminence in the church; and by various other terms, descriptive of their several functions, as stewards, ministers, shepherds, ambassadors, and so on.

§ 2. *There was but one order of permanent ministers instituted in the apostolic churches.*

Besides those officers mentioned in the New Testament, who were supernaturally qualified for the extraordinary demands of the nascent church, and who, therefore, as apostles, evangelists, and prophets, had no successors, there is, we affirm, but one order of christian ministry to be found instituted in the apostolic churches, and made permanent in the church of God; together with two other orders of *officers*, probably that of ruling elders, and certainly that of deacons. Neither of these, however, belong to the ministerial order.

Some of the reasons upon which this judgment is based, we shall now present. And first, we remark, that for the institution of presbyters, we have most express and frequent authority, but for any separate and distinct organization of a higher order, as of permanent and ordinary standing, we have no such authority. It is indisputably true, both from apostolic example and apostolic precept, that presbyters are by divine right a fixed, standing, and perpetual order of christian ministers.[1] Neither do we find any other order than that of presbyters, or bishops, in the churches as organized by the apostles. They ordained them presbyters, and only such, as far as we are informed, in every city. Acts, 14: 23. When Paul took his final leave of the church at Ephesus, he delegated all ministerial powers and authority to the presbyters, whom he expressly denominates bishops. Acts, 20: 17, &c. In the church at Philippi, there were only two kinds of officers, 'the bishops,' or presbyters, for there was a plurality of them in one church, 'and the deacons.' Phil. 1: 1. This was about the year A. D. 62 or 63. Thus, Peter, in addressing all the churches scattered over the extensive countries of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, exhorts 'the presbyters who were among them to feed,' that is, to take the oversight, as bishops of 'the flock of God.' 1 Pet. 5: 1, 2. So also, James, in writing to all the churches formed among the twelve tribes that were scattered abroad, makes mention of presbyters, and of presbyters alone. James 5: 14. And thus, also, Paul, in speaking to the Hebrew christians, exhorts them to 'remember them that have the rule over them,' that is, 'who have spoken unto you,' or preached to you, 'the word

1) See 1 Timothy, 5: 17; Acts, 20: 17, 28; Acts, 11: 30; 16: 4; 21: 18; 1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 John, 1. See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii, pp 61, 62, Eng. ed.

of God.' 'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account;' thus expressively designating presbyters and their work, but having no allusion to prelates and their duties. Heb. 13: 7, 17.[1] We might also refer to those passages in which full and explicit directions are given as to the nature and qualifications of the ministry, as, for instance, 1 Tim. 3: 1–8, Titus 1: 5–9, and 1 Pet. 5: 1–5, where we have a reference to no other order of ministers than that of presbyters. Now all these passages are, it is to be observed, historical, and must therefore be the standard of interpretation by which the meaning of all other portions of the New Testament must be explained. So that we are not left to doubt that the order of presbyters was the permanent order established in all the apostolic churches.[1]

But that prelates, or bishops, as an order distinct from that of presbyters, superior to them, and essential to the constitution of every church, were as invariably appointed, is not proved from scripture, by any clear or sufficient evidence. There is nothing in the New Testament, on which a belief in such an order can be grounded with certainty. Archbishop Potter, even where he asserts that there were, 'beyond dispute,' 'the two orders of fixed and standing ministers, namely, that of bishops and presbyters,' is obliged immediately to contradict himself by adding, that it has been disputed whether the bishops mentioned in the New Testament were not the same as presbyters, or an order superior to them, and this controversy he says he will not take upon him to decide.[2] It is therefore *certain*, 'beyond all dispute,' that the divine institution of such a superior order is *not certain*, and that it can never be held as certain by others. We nowhere read of the institution of such an order. Nowhere do we find an account of the ordination, in the same church, of an order of prelates besides the order of presbyters. Nowhere do we discover directions by which their qualifications may be determined, their duties ascertained, and their distinctive and superior functions declared. Every passage from which the inference that they must have existed has been drawn, will admit, to say the least, of a contrary interpretation, and must, we think, receive it. The denial of their appointment involves no contradiction or absurdity. Such an order, there-

1) See this fully argued by Thorndike in his Prim. Govt. of the Ch., pp. 6, 17, 18, 20, 25. See also Jamieson's Sum of the Episcopal Controv. pp. 24–31.

2) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 107.

fore, even if *permissible*, can never be made essential to the being of a church, nor to salvation, nor to a true and valid ministry, without the extremest arrogance and impiety.

It is also clear, that since the only ordinary and permanent order of the christian ministry, which can be demonstrated to have existed in the apostles' times, is that of presbyters; since they were set over the churches by the apostles in their own time, and since the apostles labored with them in the same churches for many months or years, as Paul did in Asia; presbyters are the only persons who can be fitly or in truth denominated the successors of the apostles.'[1]

§ 3. *The apostles, as ordinary ministers, were not prelates, but presbyters. Presbyters, therefore, are their successors.*

It is confirmatory of these views, that while the apostles, as such, that is, in their extraordinary character, are confessedly without fixed and standing successors in the church,[2] there is nothing in their ordinary character, considered as christian ministers, to justify the disparting of the ministry into these three orders. Archbishop Potter enumerates the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, independently of the apostles,[3] who are to be regarded as, in their extraordinary character, the founders and institutors of the church. In their ordinary character, however, as ministers, do the apostles lead us to regard them, in the light of prelates, and the presbyters as inferior to them as a second order of the ministry? The very contrary is, as we have fully seen, the truth.[4]

Presbyters, therefore, and not prelates, are the successors of the apostles in their ordinary ministerial office, since the apostles were, in fact, and were called presbyters, and were never called bishops, nor identified in their ministerial character with any other order, than the one general order of presbyters. Plainly, it is to be inferred, that if prelates are, as they assume that they are, an order essentially different and distinct from presbyters, they cannot be successors of the apostles. For that they do not succeed them in their peculiar and extraordinary character, has been made clear, whilst, in their ordinary character, 'the apostles were undoubtedly presbyters,'[5] and of course could give succession only to presbyters.

1) See Baxter on Episc. p. 78.
2) See Lectures on Apostolical Succession.
3) Potter on Church Govt. p. 107.
4) See chap. i.
5) Potter ut supra.

§ 4. *Presbyters, and not prelates, are placed next to the apostles, in the foundation of the church.*

A third argument may be founded on the declaration of saint Paul to the Ephesians, where he informs us that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.' There are three orders or successive layers, in the foundation of the catholic church. First, and as the corner stone, Jesus Christ, who was commissioned by God, the Father, to be our prophet, priest, and king. John, 20: 22, 23, and Acts, 10: 38. Secondly, the apostles, who were delegated to their task, and divinely inspired and fitted for their work, by Christ personally. Thirdly, we have prophets. These prophets are here associated with the apostles 'as fellows and co-partners in the foundation of the christian church.'[1] Now, who are to be understood by prophets? That they were ministers, and therefore of the order of presbyters, or presbyter-bishops, we fully believe, though it is probable, that they were endowed with the superadded gift of prophetical foresight. That they were specifically presbyters, and of the second order of the ministry, we are positively instructed by archbishop Potter. He says, 'when Paul parted from Barnabas he took with him Silas or Silvanus; this man was a prophet, and is so called in this history, and by consequence was of the order next to that of apostles,' that is presbyters.[2] The archbishop then quotes, as a further proof of the three orders, this very text. The same thing is affirmed by him of the prophets in the church at Antioch, of which church he says,[3] 'that hitherto there were only two orders of ministers in this church, namely, those by whom the Antiochians had been converted, who probably were of the lowest order, with Saul and Barnabas, and perhaps some others of the second order, we find THEM distinguished *by the names of prophets and teachers.*' To the same purpose speaks lord Barrington, who thinks, that as far as the prophets were not extraordinary officers, they were simply teachers, their great duty being exhortation.[4] Similar is the view taken of the prophets by Dr. Pusey, who places them in the order below the apostles, that is, of presbyters, saying, 'there were prophets whose office was to go round to those places where the apostles had preached, before

1) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 102.
2) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 102.
3) Ibid, p. 101. He affirms the same at p. 92.
4) Theol. Wks. vol. i. pp. 38, 39.

the ministry was finally settled.'[1] 'Under them, (that is, the apostles,) were placed pastors and teachers, who were, says bishop Sherlock, comprehended under the general name of prophets.'[2] The same thing is affirmed by bishop Skinner,[3] and as we shall see by others. By the term prophets, therefore, in this passage, is to be understood presbyters.

Here, then, the ministerial succession is distinctly traced from the apostles to presbyters, who were inwrought, by the spirit of God, into the very contexture of that foundation on which the entire fabric of the church rests. The apostles, in order to establish a regular and standing ministry in the church, went about ordaining presbyters, and these presbyters, under their sanction or associated with them, ordained other presbyters also, as we shall show. Presbyters constitute, therefore, the only general and authorized order of the christian ministry, as part and parcel of the necessary frame-work of the church. Presbyters are the only true and valid successors of the apostles, and prelates, if they will not take a place in the christian ministry, by virtue of their implied presbyterate, but will insist on being some other and distinct order, must find their place beyond the foundation, and of course without the walls of that temple which God builded, and not man.

If this argument is inconclusive, then it must be so because there is no conclusiveness in the arguments for three orders, even as urged by archbishop Potter, in a work which is regarded as one of the most standard authorities in favor of prelatic episcopacy.

This argument may be strengthened by a reference to that other arrangement of the ministry of the church, in Eph. 4: 11, already adverted to.[4] 'And he,' that is, Christ, 'gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.' That the apostles were, in their peculiar character, extraordinary officers, and incapable of being succeeded, has been already shown. That prophets, who were next to them, were presbyters, with peculiar gifts, is, we have seen, granted. Evangelists, therefore, could not, in order, be superior to prophets, and were, therefore, also presbyters, or teachers, with powers extended to many churches. So thinks lord Barrington and many others.[5] And that the pastors and teachers were the same

1) The Ch. the Converter of the Heathen, Serm. ii. p. 8, Oxf. 1839.
2) Wks. vol. iii. p. 281.
3) See in Mitchell's Letters to p. 89.
4) See chap. i. § 6, p. 33.
5) Wks. vol. i. p. 60. Thorndike's Prim. Govt. pp. 37, 38, 39, 252. Sinclair's Vind. of the Apost. Succ. Lond. 1839, p. 20, who calls them Missionaries. So also Eusebius and Stillingfleet, in Iren, and Dr. Rice's Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 586.

persons, and presbyters, and here represent the ungifted, ordinary, and permanent ministry of the church, is plain. 'What other were they,' says Hooker, 'than presbyters also, howbeit settled in some charge, and THEREBY differing from evangelists,' who were therefore also presbyters.[1] Dr. Pusey ranks the prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, all below apostles, and, therefore, in the order of presbyters. 'It was,' says he, 'the office of evangelists to extend Christ's kingdom among the heathen, and of pastors and teachers to cultivate and secure the ground thus taken into the vineyard.'[2] So that there is only one general permanent order of ministers established by Christ in his church, the presbyterate.[3]

§ 5. *The spiritual officers of the New Testament churches, are ranked under the classifications of presbyters or bishops, and deacons, without any allusion whatever to prelates.*

Another preliminary argument, of some importance to the cumulative character of our proofs, is the fact that every where, throughout the New Testament, without variation, the spiritual officers of the churches are ranked under the classifications of presbyters, or bishops, and deacons. There were, as has been said, some, of both these classes, extraordinarily qualified, by various heavenly gifts, for special functions, and, in this respect, distinguished by titles derived from their peculiar endowments. But, as it regards the ordinary and stated functionaries in the churches, in all the inspired epistles and other records, they are described as the bishops and deacons — or the presbyters and deacons.[4] But deacons, as we shall show, and as is allowed, are not an order of spiritual ministers, in any proper sense of the term,[5] and therefore, there was, at this time, but one order of ministers, in all the churches known to the New Testament writers. That there was but one ministerial order in the apostolic church, is granted indeed by Dr. Hammond, bishop Taylor, and others, though they are anxious to prove that it was the order of prelates. We, however, have already clearly established the indubitable certainty of the divine institution of the order of presbyters, by the im-

1) B. v. § 78, vol. ii. p. 391, also Barrington's Wks. vol. i. p. 50.

2) The Ch. the Converter of the Heathen, p. 8.

3) See this view of the passage in Ephesians, presented by Mr. Drury, one of the Westminister Assembly of Divines, in his Model of Ch. Govt. Lond. 1641, pp. 3, 7, 23, 30. Also in the cxi. Propositions concerng. the Govt. of the Ch. submitted to the Gen. Ass. of Ch. of Scotld. in 1647. Edinb. 1647. Prop. ii. p. 1.

4) E. g. Phil. 1 : 1; 1 Tim. 3; 1 Pet. 5: 12; Acts, 20: 18; Tit. 1: 5, 7.

5) Palmer on the Church, vol. ii.

mediate agency and express direction of the apostles, and under the broad seal of Christ's divine charter and commission. Prelates, therefore, as a distinct order, must necessarily be disbanded, deposed from their high office, and reduced, if found otherwise worthy and qualified to remain in the ministry at all, which is not by any means a certainty, to the simple, scriptural rank of ordinary ministers. For to whom were the powers of the apostles, as far as they were continued in the church, transferred, if not to these presbyter-bishops? Prelatists have no other scriptural name to give them. They dare not call them apostles. They were not deacons. They were, and must be, presbyters.[1] Besides, it cannot be denied, that we have, in the New Testament, a careful delineation of the qualifications necessary for bishops or presbyters, and deacons, but nowhere, as has been seen, is there any such view of the qualifications of the still more important orders of apostles, evangelists, prophets, or prelates. And why so? Manifestly because the former were the only permanent and standing officers designed for the church, while the latter were extraordinary and temporary, being placed in the church, not by the appointment of men, but by the immediate designation and endowment of Christ himself.[2]

§ 6. *The terms bishop and presbyter, both as they refer to the office and to the individuals holding it, are used throughout the New Testament as perfectly synonymous, and the very fact that prelatists have usurped the title of bishop, is proof positive of the human origin of the system of prelacy. Many objections are answered.*

This leads us to remark, as a further argument, that throughout the whole New Testament, the words presbyter and bishop, with their cognate terms, both as they refer to the office and its incumbent, are used interchangeably, and as perfectly synonymous, and the very fact that prelatists have usurped the title of bishop, is proof positive of the human origin of the system of prelacy. That these terms are so employed, has already been proved. We shall only refer to one example. Nothing can be more plain than the identification of the office, order, and duties of presbyters and bishops, by the apostle Paul, in his last solemn charge to the

1) See Dr. Rice's Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 575.

2) See Macknight on 1 Tim. 5: 17, in vol. iii. p. 206.

Ephesian presbyters. These presbyters are here expressly denominated *overseers*, and are said to have been constituted *bishops* by the Holy Ghost, the very term being employed which prelates have appropriated to themselves. Again, these presbyters are charged, by the apostle, to rule, guide, or feed the flock of God, as a shepherd does his flock; taking the oversight over them, that is, exercising a bishop's office over them, for the same word is again used. Whatever, therefore, is implied in ruling, governing, overseeing, and feeding the flock of God, or in the application of the official title of episcopos, or bishop, is here given to presbyters, under the most solemn sanctions, and by the Holy Ghost.[1]

The word bishop, as now employed by prelatists, has reference, chiefly, to the other orders of ministers, over whom it is supposed to imply oversight, authority, and supremacy. But in the New Testament, where it is only used in the substantive, or personal form, five times, (Acts, 20: 28; Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 1–5; 1 Pet. 2: 25; Titus, 1: 5–7;) it has an invariable reference, not to the ministry, but to the flock ministered unto.[2] *Επισκοπος*, or bishop, means overseer, one who has charge or oversight committed to him. It is expressive of whatever functions may be delegated to an individual, or prescribed to him by his employer. The word presbyter, means elder, senior, and is expressive, therefore, not of the functions of the office, but of the authority and power from which those functions flow, and by which they are authorized. And thus the same individual may very often consistently be called a bishop, as overseeing his flock, and a presbyter, as empowered to watch over them, by a divine commission. The apostle Peter, in his first epistle, (5: 1, 2,) certainly distinguishes the dignity of the sacred office by the name presbyters, but the duties connected with it by the term *επισκοπειν*, which is the same as *ποιμαινειν*.[3] 'I can discover,' says Neander, 'no other difference between the terms *πρεσβυτεροι*, and *επισκοποι*, in the apostolic age, than that the first signifies rank, the second the duties of the office.'[4] The only difference, therefore, is in favor of the greater dignity

1) On this passage, see Vitringa de Synagog. vet. p. 476. Thorndike on Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 36. Hooker's admission in Baxter on Episc. p. 49. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 278. Peirce's Vind. of Prot. Dissent. part ii. pp. 50, 57. Jameson's Fundament. of the Hier. p. 157.

2) Jamieson's Sum of the Episcopal Controversy, pp. 78–80, &c. Powell on Apostolic Succession, pp. 38, 39. It is also used, in another form, in 1 Pet. 5: 1, 2, and Acts i. 'his bishopric.'

3) Neander's Hist. of the First Plantg. of Christ'y. vol. i. p. 167.

4) Ibid, 169 N.

implied in the term presbyter.[1] 'This name of presbyter, by which,' says this same writer,[2] 'this office was first distinguished, was transferred from the Jewish synagogue to the christian church. But when the church extended further among Hellenic Gentiles, with this name borrowed from the civil and religious constitution of the Jews, another was joined, which was more allied to the designations of social relations among the Greeks, and adapted to point out the official duties connected with the dignity of presbyters. The name ἐπισκοπος denoted overseers over the whole of the church and its collective concerns; as in Attica, those who were commissioned to organize the states dependent on Athens, received the title of ἐπισκοποι, and as, in general, it appears to have been a frequent one, for denoting a guiding oversight in the public administration. Since then, the name ἐπισκοπος was no other than a transference of an original Jewish and Hellenistic designation of office, adapted to the social relations of the Gentiles; it follows, that originally both names related entirely to the same office, and hence both names are frequently interchanged as perfectly synonymous.'

Now — to apply these remarks — these and other phrases are employed, in the New Testament, to denote one and the same officer, and one and the same office. The importance of this conclusion will appear from the fact established in our previous argument. For if, throughout the New Testament, in every catalogue of officers; in every form of salutation; in every directory as to ministerial qualifications; ministers are spoken of as bishops and presbyters indifferently, then does it follow that there is but one order of fixed and permanent ministers recognised in the New Testament.

There was a time when it was denounced as heresy to maintain this position. Two of the charges alleged by Epiphanius against Aerius were, that he taught that the apostle, in the third chapter of his first epistle to Timothy, enumerates the qualifications, not of prelates, but of presbyters, and that in Titus, 1: 5–7, Paul considered bishops and presbyters the same persons, calling them indifferently by either name.[3] Even since that time the opinion now advanced, has been controverted with all imaginable zeal and learning, as by bishop

1) 'Of how much more majesty, says Lord Brooke, is the term presbyter, which signifies *senior*, . . . whereas episcopus signifies nothing but an *overseer* — and such indeed bishops have been for many years.' Disc. on Episc. p. 75.

2) Hist. of the First Plantg. of Christ'y, vol. i. p. 167.

3) See Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 146, 147.

Pearson and Dr. Hammond.[1] At length, however, the truth has prevailed against all opposing error, and it is now admitted by the highest prelatic authorities, that in scripture the terms bishop and presbyter designate one and the same office. Of this important concession, we will adduce some proofs. Bishop Onderdonk says,[2] 'the name bishop, which now designates the highest grade of the ministry, is not appropriated to that office in scripture. That name is there given to the middle order of presbyters; and all that we read in the New Testament, concerning bishops, (including, of course, the words 'overseers' and 'oversight,') is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade.' 'That presbyters were called bishops,' says Dr. Bowden,[3] 'I readily grant; and I also grant that this proves that the officer who was then called a bishop; and consequently the office was the same.' Dr. Chapman is still bolder, declaring that 'the episcopalian cannot be found who denies the interchangeable employment of the terms bishop and presbyter, in the New Testament.'[4]

This term bishop, it would appear, was in use in this interchangeable application, even in old testament times. 'Yea,' says archbishop Usher,[5] 'in the xi. of Nehemy, we find two named bishops, the one of the priests, the other of the Levites, that dwelt in Jerusalem. The former, so expressly termed by the Greek in the 14th, the latter, both by the Greek and Latin interpreter in the 22d verse, and not without approbation of the scripture itself, which rendereth the Hebrew word of the same original in the Old and by the Greek *episcopos* in the New Testament.' That the terms bishop and presbyter continued to represent the same office and persons, even to the close of the apostolic government and of the inspired records, is admitted by Hooker, who would have us believe, that for this reason the term angel is employed in the Book of Revelation.[6] Such, also, is the judgment of Hadrian Saravia.[7] To this may be added the opinion of archbishop Whitgift. 'I know,' says he, 'these names be confounded in the scriptures, but I speak according to the manner and custom of the church, even since the apostles time.'[8] But we may go still higher, and give the avowed opinion of eleven bishops, two archbish-

1) See in Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part ii. p. 55.

2) Episcopacy tested by Scripture, in Wks. on Episc. vol. ii. p. 420.

3) Wks. on Episcop. vol. i. p. 161.

4) Dr. Chapman, Serm. to Presb. p. 238.

5) The original of Bishops, in Scott's Coll. of Tracts, vol. xii. p. 268.

6) Eccl. Pol. B. vii. ch. v. § ii. p. 100, vol. iii. Kible's ed.

7) On the Priesthood, pp. 60, 85, 118.

8) Defence of the Answer to Cartwright, Lond. Fol. 1574, p. 383.

ops, and many other doctors and civilians, in the famous 'Declaration made of the functions and divine institution of bishops and priests,' where it is said, 'the truth is, that in the New Testament, there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons, or ministers, and of priests or bishops.' Bishop Burnet in his Vindication of the Church of Scotland[1] says: 'and I the more willingly incline to believe bishops and presbyters to be the several degrees of the same office, since the names of bishop and presbyter are used for the same thing in scripture; and are also used promiscuously by the writers of the two first centuries.' It is an argument of some weight in favor of the position that in the apostles' times the office of bishop and presbyter was one and the same, that the Syriac version, which was probably made early in the second century, and whose authority is very great, always renders the term '*bishop*' by a word which corresponds to 'elder' or presbyter, as in Acts. 20: 17. 28: 1 Pet. 5: 1, 2: 1 Tim. iii. 1, &c. On this subject Michaelis remarks, 'we know that the distinction between bishops and elders was introduced into the christian church in a very early age, yet this distinction was unknown to the Syriac translator.'[2] To this opinion bishop Marsh appends the following note: 'this proves ONLY that the Syriac translator understood his original, and that he made a proper distinction between the language of the primitive, and that of the hierarchical church.'[3] That in scripture, the names of presbyter and bishop were interchangeably applied to the same office and order, is allowed, also, by many of the ancient fathers.[4] Thus Irenæus calls the very bishops of whom he gives a list, as successors to the apostles, presbyters.[5] Tertullian, also, insinuates the same thing.[6] He says, *probati præsident seniores*,[7] in quoting which, Mr. Palmer says, 'the bishops were often called presbyters.'[8] Hilary, the deacon, says, that 'the ordination of bishop and presbyter is the same, for both are priests,' or presbyters. He also affirms, *quia primum presbyteri episcopi appellabantur*, that is, presbyters were at first called bishops.[9] The

1) See Conf. 4, p. 165. ed. ii.

2) Introd. to the N. T. vol. ii. part i. p. 32.

3) Ibid. vol. ii. p. 553.

4) Bingham's Eccl. Ant. B. ii. ch. i. vol. i. p. 41, and ch. xix. p. 189.

5) Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. iv. cap. xliii. and cap. xliv. and as quoted in Euseb. lib. i. cap. xxiii. and in lib. v. cap. xxiv. See King's Prim. Church, p. 66.

6) Tertull. Apol. cap. xxxix.

7) This term was given to presbyters, see proved in Jameson's Culdees, 4to. Edinb. pp. 62, 64. Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 52, 53, 58. King's Prim. Christ'y p. 61, &c.

8) Palmer on the Church, vol. ii. p. 420.

9) Hilary on Eph. 4: 2. See in Presb. Pamph. No. ii. p. 57, and on 1 Tim. 3, also.

Culdees also used these terms bishop and presbyter interchangeably, as Bede testifies.[1] That the word bishop was anciently employed in a sense very different from that afterwards attached to it, is shown by Mr. Jamieson from numerous facts in the history of the British Isles, and might be made to appear, he says, 'by ample proof brought from the general history of christendom.'[2] Clemens Alexandrius calls the same individuals, and in the same paragraph, bishops and presbyters.[3] Cyprian calls his presbyters *pastores ovium*,[4] or pastors; also, *præpositi*, or presidents set over the people.[5] Origen denominates the presbyters αρχοντες του λαου the governors of the people.[6] Clemens Alexandrinus would appear most unequivocally to identify bishops and presbyters as one and the same, for he assures us the apostles established in the churches only, 'bishops and deacons,' and that 'for many ages past it was thus prophesied concerning bishops and deacons.'[7] The martyrs of the Gallacian church call Irenæus a presbyter after, as Blondel shows, he must have been nine years bishop in the place of Pothinus.[8] In his epistle to Florinus, Irenæus calls Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, 'that holy and apostolic presbyter.'[9] Cyprian several times applies to both bishops and presbyters the same title of *præpositus*, or president, to whom he ascribes apostolical succession.[10] Chrysostom very fully and explicitly testifies to the original application to the same individual of the names bishop and presbyter. In process of time, he says, the names were specially appropriated, though many bishops, even in his days, called their presbyters *compresbyteri*.[11] Œcumenius says, 'many are ignorant of the manner, especially of the New Testament, whereby bishops are called presbyters and presbyters bishops.'[12] Theodoret is not less plain. 'The apostles,' says he, 'call a presbyter a bishop, as we showed when we explained the epistle to the Philippians, which may be also learned from this place, that is, 1 Tim. 3.'[13] Thus, also, speaks Pelagius

1) See Hist. L. v. § v. and Jamieson's Culdees pp. 332, 237.

2) Jamieson's Culdees, p. 333, et seq.

3) See Apud. Euseb. lib. v. cap. xxiv. and in Stromat. lib. iii. and lib. vi.

4) Cyprian Epist. xi. § i.

5) Ibid, and Epist. lxii. § ii.

6) Comment. on Matt. Apud. King's Prim. Ch. p. 67.

7) Epist. i, ad. Corinth. see quoted in King's, &c. pp. 68, 69.

8) Euseb. lib. v. c. iv. and Stillingfleet Irenænum, p. 311.

9) Iren. Oper. Fragmenta Bened. Edn. 1710, p. 339.

10) Ep. x. xi. and lxii. and Stillingfleet Irenicum, p. 308.

11) Hom. i. ad Phil. in Wks. Tom. xi p. 224.

12) On Phil. i. 1, in Jameson's Fundament of the Hier. p. 169.

13) On 1 Tim. iii. in do. p. 170.

on Phil. 1 : 1. 'Here by bishops we understand presbyters, for there could not have been more bishops in one city: but we have this matter, also, in the Acts of the Apostles.'[1] Sedulius, also proves the identity of bishops and presbyters, both with the apostles and among the ancients.[2] Primasius expresses his opinion in the very words of Pelagius.[3] With these agrees the council of Aquisgranensis, cap. 8,[4] 'collecting thus out of this place *Paulus apostolus presbyteros ut vere sacerdotes sub nomine episcoporum adseuerat:* Paul the apostle doth affirm the elders or presbyters to be true priests or pastors under the name of bishops.[5] To this conclusion, that in scripture the terms bishop and presbyter are synonymous, prelatists have been now universally driven by the undeniable usage of scripture. Thus when the apostles instructed Titus to see that presbyters were ordained in every city, he lays down the qualifications necessary for a presbyter, by saying, 'for a bishop must be blameless,' &c. (Titus, 1 : 5, 7.) Presbyters are required to possess the same qualifications for their office as bishops. (Titus, 1 : 5, 7; 1. Tim. 3 : 1, 2, &c.; Acts, 20 : 17, 18.) Presbyters are to discharge the same duties as are laid down for bishops. Presbyters are set apart to their work by the same express authority, and consecration, as bishops. (Acts, 20 : 17, 28; and Titus, 1 : 5 – 7.) Presbyters and bishops being thus identified in name, qualifications, duties, ordination, and authority, are necessarily one and the same in office. Presbyters are bishops, and bishops are no more than presbyters. There is, and can be, but the one order. Presbyters are the only apostolic bishops, who were the first and rightful successors of the apostles.

Now, it must be admitted, that names are given for the very purpose of designating the person or object named. By their application, the individual or object is distinguished from other individuals and objects. And when different names are given to one and the same object, they, together, fully designate that object. In the Bible, we also find that names are generally significant of some quality, property, or circumstance connected with the object or person to whom they are applied. These titles, therefore, of bishop and presbyter, are not to be regarded as arbitrary titles. On the contrary, they were imposed by inspired men, under direction

1) See in ibid, p. 176, and on 1 Tim. 3 : and Tit. 1 : in do. p.177, which are very strong.

2) In ibid, p. 177.

3) In ibid, p. 177.

4) Willet Syn. Pap. p. 269.

5) See numerous quotations to the same effect in Gieseler's Eccl. Hist. vol. i. pp. 56, 57. Du Pin vol. i. pp. 42, 182, De Moor's Comment. tom. vi. p. 261 – 270. Binii Concil. tom. vii. p. 474, and tom. vi. p. 241.

of the supreme wisdom of God, in full view of what was most appropriate, and looking to the present and future interests of the church. And since God has seen right to employ the terms bishop and presbyter as synonymous, and as both expressive of the same ministerial order, the argument for the identity, both in name and office, of the scripture bishops and presbyters, appears demonstrative.

But further, since these titles of bishop and presbyter are thus manifestly applied by the Holy Spirit to the same office and order; since they are still expressive of the office of the ministry in its different aspects; and since God, who, for wise reasons first gave them, has never altered their application; they ought, beyond all controversy, to retain their original meaning. They do not, of themselves, distinguish different orders. They are specially set apart as different names for one and the same order. They were certainly thus employed, until the close of the apostolic age, and much later. Nor has any human tribunal authority to change their meaning, or to make them distinctive of two essentially separate orders. And yet this change has been effected by prelatists, and they now formally teach us, that 'it is evident to all men, diligently reading the holy scriptures, that there have been, *from the apostles' time*, three orders of ministers in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons! Here then is a manifest contradiction between the practice and teaching of the prelacy, and that of the apostles and the New Testament writers generally.

That this change in the use of these titles has taken place, is universally allowed, so that Dr. Bowden will not admit that, from the second century until the present time, in any single instance, presbyters are ever called bishops.[1] It is also granted, that this change took place after the death of the apostles. The earliest authority for this alteration of titles, is Theodoret, a writer of the fifth century. 'Theodoret,' says Mr. Daubeny, observes that, '*in process of time*, for distinction's sake, the name of apostle came only to be given to the apostles, especially so called.'[2] The same writer adds, in reference to the title of bishop, that before this 'distinct appropriation,' which was made in *process of time*, 'this title had before been common to ecclesiastics of different degrees.'[3] Since he adduces Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived A. D. 194, and Tertullian also,[4] as still using the term apostle, in

1) Wks. on Episc. vol. i. p. 161.
2) Guide to the Ch. vol. ii. p. 63. Lond. 1804.
3) Ibid, p. 64.
4) Ibid, p. 63.

reference to ministers subsequent to the original apostles, we are, of course, left to conclude, that in their age, the term bishop was *not* appropriated to an order of prelates, but was common also to presbyters. And as he shows that Cyprian first calls the apostles bishops, and the bishops of his time successors of the apostles, we must trace the commencement of the prelatic usage of these terms to the Cyprianic age.[1] From that time to the present, the term bishop has been made to signify a prelate, and the term presbyter an officer who can have no existence but through the manipulations of a prelate; and no powers, rights, or authority, but what are conveyed to him by prelatic delegation: and yet, it is confessed, that, in scripture, both these terms meant one and the same order. Now, when a man changes his name, and assumes that of some other person, we must believe he has done so for some purpose of self-interest and advantage. And when prelates surreptitiously possessed themselves of the title bishop, and denied it, on pain of heresy and revolt, to presbyters, they must have had a reason. We insist upon it, that some satisfactory explanation shall be given of the fact, that the title of bishop, confessedly belonging to presbyters, should have been taken from them, and given to prelates. As to the plea of modesty, set up by Theodoret, it is perfectly ridiculous, in reference to those to whom were applied the lofty and profane titles of Pontifex Maximus, Summus Pontifex, Summus Sacerdos, Princeps Sacerdotum, and the like.[2] And besides, this plea of modesty, however it might avail Ignatius, who denied that bishops were successors of the apostles,[3] or even Ambrose, who said, 'I do not claim the honor of apostles, for who had this but those whom the Son of God himself chose,'[4] will render but little service to those who now asseverate their claims to be true and lineal successors of the apostles, with all possible effrontery and shamelessness. What, then, was the reason, for thus tampering with the divine authority; for thus casting imputation upon the divine wisdom; and altering a divine arrangement? One of their own party has said, that 'a self-originated upstart may take a man's name, and claim his inheritance; but when his title comes to be examined, the true right will appear, and justice will take place.'[5] And so will it be in the present case. For

1) Guide to the Ch. vol. ii. p. 63. Lond. 1804.

2) See Faber's Diff. of Romanism, p. 81.

3) See Dr. Willet's Synopsis Papismi, p. 273.

4) Wks. Tom. iv. 1. in Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 141.

5) Jones's Wks. vol. iv. p. 495. Essay on the Ch.

the change in these names manifestly proves, that a change had taken place in the relations of the two offices or orders to which they had been applied.[1] Otherwise, the change would have been unnecessary, and sound policy would have forbidden it, since 'a veil of mystery is hereby artificially thrown upon the subject, which would never have existed, if the original name of apostle had been suffered to remain unaltered.'[2] Nor can all the skill of man wipe off from prelatists, the unescapeable imputation, that by this exclusive appropriation to the order of prelates, of the term bishop, which belongs exclusively to presbyters, they intended to palm the order of prelates upon the world, under the cover of a divinely instituted title, and thus to procure for it that divine origin, authority, and preëminence, to which it has no scriptural claim. Nor have all the learned advocates of prelacy, with all their sophistry, been able to defend her, in this matter, from manifest sacrilege, and a violation of 'the sacredness of divine truth.'[3] And if prelatists will resent this charge as calumnious, let them inform us when, where, by whom, and upon what authority, this change was made, and why that title, which was signed, sealed, and delivered over to presbyters, as their perpetual right, was employed by prelates, to cover the nakedness of their pretensions to a divine charter?

How different is the meaning conveyed by the same word, at different times, may be at once seen by a reference to the term *imperator*. While Rome was free and enjoyed her republican form of government uncorrupted, this title designated only an officer in the army, of the same rank and power with his brother officers. But when Julius Cæsar had enslaved his country, and overturned the government, he appropriated this title to himself and his sucessors; and hence the term *imperator*, which formerly signified an officer of equal rank and powers with others, came to mark out one who held supreme authority over all others, both in the army and the state.

Now just as it was in ancient Rome with the term *imperator*, was it in the ancient church with the term bishop. Bishop in the scripture, and in the apostolic churches, signified only a minister of the gospel, of equal rank and authority with his fellow ministers, however otherwise denominated. But when prelates had arrived at their supremacy in the church,

1) See this argument employed by Burnet, on the xxxix. art. p. 436.

2) Dr. Chapman's Sermons to Presb. of all Sects, p. 239.

3) See Bishop Bull's Vind. p. 258.

or rather were securing to themselves the attainment of power, they appropiated the exclusive application of this title, and of course all the powers it originally implied: and thus covered their usurpation of the rights of the clergy, under the shield of a scriptural title, and a divine right.

It is said, indeed, that this reasoning from the names, bishop and presbyter, is a mere verbal and flimsy sophistry, and that the question 'cannot be one of words.' But this surely is an after thought—a refuge from evident defeat—and a most dangerous, as well as delusive artifice. For who are such 'word-mongers' as these same prelatists? 'I am sorry,' says one of themselves, 'that this seems to be the plan commonly adopted by the tractators.[1] (that is the high churchmen.) Under a phrase which may be interpreted in various ways, they lay down a certain doctrine, and then quote as supporters of their views, all those who have defended any doctrine that has borne the same name,' and thus do they delude their people by playing upon this very term, bishop, and upon its use in ancient writers in a sense entirely different from theirs. Let us, however, test the validity of this objection. We mutually believe in the fundamental doctrine of our Lord's divinity. Now is the argument for this doctrine, founded on the unquestionable fact, that the same divine names, titles, and attributes, are indiscriminately applied to each of the persons in this glorious godhead, a mere verbal sophistry? to be at once overthrown by the retorted cavil, that this doctrine cannot be made a question of words? Surely not. And neither is the argument founded upon the application of the very term now given to prelates, to presbyters, for the identity of these officers, weak or invalid.

We are, however, reminded, that in the New Testament, ALL the names of the officers of the church are used interchangeably. Thus our Lord himself is designated as an apostle, a bishop, and a deacon; and the apostles, also, are described as ministers, that is, deacons, and their office as a ministry.[2] Now, we may admit all this, and yet deny that, in any given case, the deacons are called either bishops or apostles. In one sense of the term deacon, (a minister,) all are deacons that are ministers, although, in its official sense, neither Christ, nor the apostles, nor presbyters, are deacons, and therefore deacons are never called by *their* titles. The words,

1) Goode's Divine Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 100.

2) See this argument urged by Perceval on the Ap. Succ. and at great length by bishop Onderdonk.

therefore, are not used indiscriminately, or synonymously. On the other hand, bishops are not only called presbyters, but presbyters are just as freely called bishops, and the same individuals, in the same breath, are called both bishops and presbyters. These terms *are* therefore used indiscriminately, and are synonymous, and, being both applied to the same thing, must refer to one and the same order. And we cannot but regard this elaborate exposure, of what is termed 'a flimsy sophistry of names,' as, after all, a very poor reply to the *fact*, that in the inspired word of God the name bishop is applied to presbyters as their characteristic title, and as little better than solemn trifling.[1] Neither is it true, that we base our argument upon the mere fact, that both these names are common, but upon the fact, that the qualifications and characters, the work and office, to which these different titles are given, are one and the same, and are identical. But prelatists, on the contrary, argue, that diocesan prelates are the same as the primitive bishops, and when asked for a reason, they can give no other, than that both are called bishops, although the work, duty, and office of each is as different as presbytery and prelacy, and are inconsistent and incompatible. So that, after all, it is to prelatists we are indebted for this flimsy argument, *ad nominem*, while we alone argue *ad rem.*[2]

Bishops and presbyters, then, are in scripture one and the same order, and since, as archbishop Laud teaches, our Lord made the twelve disciples bishops, 'and gave them the name of bishops as well as of apostles,'[3] and since this name is confessedly the scripture title of presbyters, presbyters must be the true and valid successors of the apostles. The custom of the church, as Whitgift confesses, and not the authority of scripture, must be sought for the true foundation of the prelatic office. Scripture knows only presbyter-bishops, but no bishops of presbyters. Presbyters are bishops according to the scriptural canons; prelates are bishops by virtue of the ecclesiastical canons. Prelates are bishops *in phrasi pontifica*, presbyters *in phrasi apostolica*, and they alone can be traced up to apostolic origin and institution.

But to all this it is confidently objected, that there is, in the New Testament, a very careful distinction between 'apostles and elders,' (Acts, 15: 2, 4, 6, and ch. 16: 4,)[4] by which it is shown, that the apostles are 'superior in ministerial power

1) See Boyse's Amcl. Episc. p. 207.
2) See Powell on Ap. Succ. 2d ed. p. 301.
3) On the Lit. and Episc. p. 195.
4) Bishop Onderdonk Ep. Test. by Scr. pp. 14, 15.

and rights.' Now that the apostles, as such, in their character of inspired and extraordinary officers in the church of God, were distinct, and distinguished from the presbyters, or the ordinary ministers of the churches, no one was ever foolish enough to question. That they were, in this respect, very different, is freely allowed; but that, in this respect, the apostles had any successors, is what we confidently deny. These expressions, then, most assuredly do not teach that any other difference existed between the apostles and presbyters, than what must exist between apostles and prelates, and to assume, that because the names of the apostles and presbyters are coupled together by the conjunction *and;* therefore the one, as ministers, represented a permanent order in the church higher than the other, is surely too flagrant a begging of the entire question, to be for one moment tolerated. Until it can be shown that the characteristic distinction of the apostles was their superiority in ministerial rights, as an order in the church, this attempted argument is worse than idle.[1] It may, however, be still further objected, that, granting presbyters and bishops to be of the same order, they may be different degrees of the same order. But this evasion cannot avail. It is, in the first place, suicidal. For among bishops it is denied that there is any difference in degree, although archbishops preside in all convocations, and have other prerogatives. Now, either such presidency constitutes a different degree, or else it can effect no such change among presbyters. The same is true of the order of deacons, which admits of no higher and lower degrees, however varied in its stations, and must, therefore, be true of the order of presbyters. The apostles, again, were all of one order, and yet do many *prelatists*, as well as Romanists, insist, that Peter had a kind of presidency among them. But do they therefore allow, that he was, as papists affirm, of a different *degree?* By no means. Finally, as all difference in degree must come from difference of power given in ordination; and since, as Hilary affirms, and the body of the ancient church teaches, for a long period bishops and presbyters had but one imposition of hands, their powers must have been equal, and their degree, as well as order, the same.[2]

Presbyters, then, are the scripture bishops, and therefore the true bishops, and the true successors of the apostles. This title of bishop, prelatists have unlawfully taken from

1) See Barnes' Episc. Exd. p. 106, &c.

2) See Jameson's Cyp. Isct. p. 221, &c.

presbyters. And, as a stolen title vests not by use, so is there no prescription that can make this good to prelatists.[1] Every minister, therefore, of all denominations, may now, as they are actually doing, resume the title of bishop as their inalienable prerogative.

1) See N. Y. Rev. Jan. 1842.

# CHAPTER V.

## PRESBYTERS ARE CLOTHED BY APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY WITH ALL THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY.

### § 1. *Presbyters are divinely authorized to preach the gospel.*

We are now brought to another branch of our subject. Having shown that the bishops of scripture are in name and office presbyters, we are led to inquire whether these presbyter-bishops are represented, in scripture, as invested with all the powers which can be reasonably claimed for prelates, since, if they are, they must necessarily be regarded as the true and only successors of the apostles. Now we have already seen in what respects prelates are said to be successors of the apostles.[1] 'In the *extraordinary* privileges of the apostles,' says bishop Jeremy Taylor,[2] 'they had no *successors*; therefore, of necessity, a *successor* must be constituted in the ordinary office of apostolate. Now what is this ordinary office? Most certainly since the extraordinary (as is evident) was only a help for the *founding* and beginning; the other are such as are *necessary* for the *perpetuating* of a church. Now in clear evidence of sense, these offices and powers are preaching, baptizing, consecrating, ordaining, and governing. . . . . These the apostles had without all question, and whatsoever they had, they had from Christ, and these were *eternally necessary*, these then were the offices of the apostolate, which Christ promised to assist for ever, *and this is that which we now call the order and office of episcopacy.*'

Those powers, which are usually denominated the keys, by which prelates are alleged to be distinguished, according to archbishop Potter,[3] are best enumerated under the heads;

1) See p. 57, 85.
2) Episcopacy asserted in Wks. vol. vii.
3) On Ch. Govt. ch. 5.

1. of preaching; 2. of publicly praying; 3. of baptizing; 4. of consecrating the Lord's Supper; 5. of confirmation, and of ordaining ministers; 6. of spiritual jurisdiction, particularly excommunication, under which we will include what he terms the power of making canons.[1]

If, then, we can show that the scriptures assign to presbyters these functions, so far as it recognises them at all, then may we confidently conclude, that presbyters, being thus by divine right clothed with all the powers by which successors of the apostles can be distinguished, are not merely the only true bishops, but also the only true and valid ministerial successors of the apostles.

We shall first, therefore, prove, that according to the word of God, presbyters are authorized to preach the gospel. This is justly affirmed by archbishop Potter, to be described in the word of God as one of the principal parts of the apostolic office. 'Nothing,' he adds, 'can be more certain than that preaching was an essential part of the apostolic office.'[2]

Now we are instructed by prelatists, that the seventy were a lower order than the apostles, being either presbyters, or deacons. But it is certain that the seventy were comissioned by our Saviour to preach; for he solemnly assures them, that 'he that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.' Luke, 10: 16.

Preaching, therefore, is, by the express teaching of Christ, according to the interpretation of our opponents themselves, the function of presbyters, or of that order which was, as they affirm, lower than the apostles. Again, there is, as we have shown, but one commission in virtue of which the gospel can be preached at all, or ministers employed for this purpose. And since presbyters are allowed to be an order of ministers, they must be so by virtue of that commission; but by the same power they are authoritatively enjoined to preach the gospel, which is the burden of that commission. Again, that presbyters were originally commissioned to preach, we argue from the fact, that in all ages of the church, presbyters have been preachers of the gospel. This power, therefore, must have been considered theirs by original divine right. This argument, if well weighed, is conclusive against the scriptural origin of prelates. For if, as archbishop Potter affirms, the power of preaching resides in prelates, and belongs to presbyters only when delegated to them by prelates, then it is

1) See Potter on Ch. Govt. 2) On Ch. Govt. p. 204.

plain that there is no such order below prelates, and that prelates are but presbyters with assumed prerogatives. For preaching, which is the key of knowledge, and the principal seat of apostolic authority, being intrusted, by Christ's special authority, only to Christ's appointed officers, cannot, in the very nature of things, be delegated or transferred to any other order of men. And if this conclusion is not allowed, and it is affirmed that prelates may, and do, delegate to presbyters in their ordination this principal and essential function of their order, then surely it must follow, that in the same way they delegate to them the right and power of ordination, which cannot be more important than the '*principal part*' of their office. But no order put in trust by Christ, with special powers, to the exclusion of other orders, can with his authority or sanction delegate that trust to one of those orders who had been thus excluded.[1]

Should these proofs be considered as inconclusive, there are others which must be satisfactory. One qualification of a presbyter, as laid down by the apostle Paul, and as descriptive of the office to which he is ordained, is that he should be orthodox, (Titus, 1 : 9 – 11,) 'holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.' Here, surely, we have authority for presbyters to preach, and to preach with authority, yea, to stop the mouths of unruly and vain talkers and deceivers. In like manner, in another description of the qualifications of a presbyter, it is declared that he must 'be apt to teach,' (1 Tim. 3 : 2.) Paul solemnly enjoined the Ephesian presbyters, 'to take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood.' Acts, 20 : 28.[2] Besides, no church could exist without the administration of the word, in the preaching of the gospel, and therefore were presbyters ordained in every city. And since, during the apostolic age, the only officers appointed in some of the churches were, as archbishop Potter allows, presbyters and deacons,[3] these

1) See Corbet on the Ch. pp. 41, 42. The Ch. Independent of Civil Govt p. 57. Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 377.

2) See also Acts, 20 : 17, 28; Eph. 4 . 11; Phil. 1 : 1; 1 Tim. 3 : 1; Acts, 20 : 7; Matt. 24 : 45, 46; 1 Thes. 5 : 12.

3) On Ch. Govt. p. 110.

presbyters must, of necessity, have preached. Again, whoever is the pastor of any flock, must feed it with the bread of life, giving to every man his portion in due season; instructing, reproving, and exhorting, with all long-suffering and diligence. Now prelates are not thus pastors to any given flock, but are overseers of those who are. Many who are not able to preach, as the Rhemists inform us, are qualified to be bishops, so that preaching cannot be a necessary part of the prelate's duty.[1] Presbyters, therefore, being pastors, are by their very office required to preach. It has also been seen, that the presbyterate has ever been regarded, even by prelatists themselves, as the generic order, of which the episcopate is a mere extension. Preaching, therefore, was also believed to be one of the necessary functions of the priesthood, as indeed it must have been, otherwise it could belong to no order or office in the church at all.

To this conclusion prelatists are obliged to accede, and to give to it their suicidal testimony. 'Presbyters,' says Dr. Bowden,[2] 'have a divine commission for preaching the word and administering the sacraments.' 'Hence we infer,' says Hadrian Saravia, 'that every presbyter and bishop in the church of Christ is also a pastor; for it is the business of a presbyter to feed the Lord's flock with wholesome doctrine.'[3] 'We find,' says bishop Heber, 'these apostles in the exercise

1) Note on 1 Tim. 5:17. 'Now our lordly prelates have been so far from executing this principal part of their office and work, that some of them, (as Canterbury, Yorke, London, and Oxford,) did not so much as preach one sermon in sundry years; others of them have preached very rarely; yea, most of them have by themselves and their instruments written and preached against frequent preaching; suppressed all week-day lectures, and sermons on Lord's day afternoons, throughout their dioceses; and Dr. Pierce, bishop of Bath and Wells, by name, in a letter to Canterbury, thanked God that he had not left one lecture nor afternoon sermon in his diocese; and suspended the minister of Bridgwater only for preaching a lecture in his own parish church, which had continued fifty years; and when this bishop, after much solicitation, upon this minister's promise never to preach the lecture more, absolved him from his suspension, he then most blasphemously applied Christ's words used to the sick man, to this good minister: behold, thou art made whole; go away, sin no more, (that is, preach no more,) lest a worse thing come unto thee. He convented another minister, only for expounding the catechism on the Lord's day afternoon, saying, it was as bad as preaching. Whence Queen Elizabeth used to say, when she made preaching ministers bishops, that she had made a bishop, but marred a preacher; it being true that the bishop of Dunkeld once answered Dean Thomas Farret, when he wished him to preach, 'I tell thee we bishops were not ordained to preach,' it being too mean an office for them, unless it be sometimes at the court, or at some such solemn meeting, to gain either more honor or preferment thereby, or for some such private ends; not out of any great zeal of converting souls to God.' Prynne's Lordly Prel. Pref.

2) Wks. on Episc. vol. i. p. 159.

3) On the Priesthood, pp. 113, 122

of the authority thus received, appointing elders in every city, as dispensers of the word and sacraments of religion.'[1]

To this agree the decrees of ancient writers and councils. 'Unto priests as well as unto bishops, is committed the dispensation of God's mysteries, for they are set over the church of God, and are partakers with bishops . . . in the teaching of the people and the office of preaching.'[2] 'It is a very bad custom,' says the council of Constantinople, 'in certain churches, for priests to hold their peace in the presence of the bishops, as though they did either envy or scorn to hear them, contrary to the apostle,'[3] &c. Gregory thus speaks, in his Pastorals; *prædictionis officium suscipit, quis-quis ad sacerdotium accedit:* whosoever taketh priesthood upon him, taketh upon him also the office of preaching.'[4] 'Seeing to you,' says Gregory of Nyssa, 'and to such as you, adorned with hoary wisdom from above, and who are presbyters indeed, and justly styled the fathers of the church, the word of God conducts us to learn the doctrines of salvation, saying, ask thy father and he will show thee: thy elders, and they will tell thee.'[5] And so also the first council of Aquisgranense, A. D. 816, most explicitly attributes to presbyters the function of preaching, and of administering the sacraments.[6]

It was, in fact, the general doctrine of all the fathers, that the words addressed by Christ to Peter, 'feed my sheep,' were addressed to all the ministers of Christ:[7] and thus Suicer, in entering upon his illustration of the term presbyter from the Greek fathers, defines presbyters as those to whom is committed the word of God or the preaching of the gospel.'[8]

It is thus manifest, that preaching is the great work and duty to which, as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, presbyters are consecrated.[9] But this is also allowed to have been the first and most essential prerogative of the apostles, and that which they themselves ranked higher than all their spiritual and extraordinary gifts, and invested with which they exerted all their powers, publicly and privately, to preach the gospel to the utmost compass of their commission.[10] Preaching also was

1) Sermons in England, p. 251.

2) Concil. Aquisgranens, cap. 8, ex. Isid. in Willet, p. 271. See also Constantinop. cap. 8, 9, and 95, c. 6, in ibid.

3) Ibid, in ibid.

4) Fox, p. iv. respons. ad. artic. 22, col. 2.

5) See in Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 136. See also a similar view by Basil the Great, in ibid, p. 129.

6) See can. 8, in Binii Concil. Tom. vi. p. 241, c. 2, A.

7) Palmer on the Church, vol. ii. p. 488.

8) Thesaurus, vol. ii. p. 825.

9) See authorities in Henderson's Rev. p. 122.

10) Acts, 5:20, 21, 42; 20:20, 21, with Rom. 15:19; Col. 1:23.

considered their great work and duty by the bishops of the Cyprianic and previous ages, as has been most abundantly proved.[1] Preaching, in short, is now generally acknowledged to be the chief ordinance and instrumentality, by which God secures the salvation of sinners. 'It hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the preaching of the word;' 'and Christ,' says Paul, 'sent or commissioned me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.'[2] It is to preaching, christianity owes its origin; its continuance; its progress; its reformation; and its present extending revival.[3] 'It is,' says Gregory Nazianzen, 'the principal thing that belongs to us ministers of the gospel.'[4] Erasmus, after comparing the offices of the ministry, gives the preëminence to preaching. For six hundred years, as Whitaker would prove, the church disowned, as worthy bishops, those who were either unable or unwilling to preach.[6] The thirty-sixth of the apostolic canons, requires the bishop, who was not diligent in teaching, to be laid aside; while the thirty-ninth also intrusts the bishop with the people's souls. 'So worthy a part of divine service we should greatly wrong,' says Hooker, 'if we did not esteem preaching as the blessed ordinance of God; sermons as keys to the kingdom of heaven, as wings to the soul, as spurs to the good affections of man, with the sound and healthy as food, as physic unto diseased souls.'[7]

Preaching, therefore, being the chief power and characteristic of the apostles,[8] and the principal key to the kingdom of heaven, cannot be usurped without treasonable impiety; neither can it be delegated to any order of men to whom Christ has not given it. But this power, in all its plenitude, has, we have seen, been committed, by divine authority, to the order of presbyters. It has also been exercised by them, from the days of the apostles, until the present time. And hence do we conclude that presbyters are the only true and lawful successors of the apostles.

This seems to be the plain and undoubted teaching of scripture itself. For when the apostle Paul had sent his com-presbyter Timothy, who, like himself, had been ordained by presbyters, to set in order and fully organize the Asiatic

1) See a large collection of authorities in Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 456, &c.

2) See Bowles's Past. Evang. lib. ii. c. 1; Fuller's Church Hist. B. ix.; and Bridge's Ch. Min. p. 193, 8vo. ed.

3) Douglas's Adv. of Soc.

4) Orat. 1.

5) Erasm. Eccles. lib. i.

6) De Eccl. contro. 2, cap. 3.

7) Eccl. Pol. B. v. § 22.

8) St. Augustine makes it the proper mark of a bishop to preach De offic. i. c. 1.

churches, he gave him these instructions: 'and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.' (2 Tim. 2: 2.) Here the existence of a ministerial succession, and its general nature, are distinctly stated. We have here, also, the chain of this succession, as far as the close of the second century, clearly marked out by the Holy Spirit himself. The great deposit, to be thus carried down to the end of time, is the christian doctrine, as preached by men authorized to proclaim and make it known.[1] To commit this truth to an order of men who should take charge of the several churches; and who might, in turn, commit it unto others also, was the great end of the apostle, in the commission of Timothy. It was in this way these apostles and evangelists fulfilled their purpose, in preparing the churches for the ordinary ministry of the gospel, and thus completing the organization of the christian body.[2] This ministry, Timothy was to organize, and then leave them to ordain and appoint their successors in the preaching of the gospel. Now, who were they, to whom, by express apostolic authority, this power and office was intrusted? Without controversy, they were presbyters. Presbyters alone are described by the apostle, when he proceeds fully to delineate the character, qualifications, and duties of the ministry to be appointed.[3] 'For this cause,' did the apostle leave Titus in Crete, and send Timothy to Ephesus, 'that they should set in order the things that were wanting,' to a full and permanent organization of the churches, 'and ordain presbyters in every city, as he had appointed.[4] The first ministerial succession, permanently appointed in the christian church, was, therefore, that of presbyters. And the next link in this golden chain, by which the truth was to be borne downwards to every age, was a succession of other presbyters, appointed by these first presbyters. And hence, since the great burden of the apostolic commission, was preaching, and this great duty is so plainly committed to presbyters, we are infallibly taught, that a presbyterial succession is, by the express authority of the Holy Spirit, constituted the true and only permanent ministeral order in the church of Christ.

If, therefore, there is but one ministerial order in the church of Christ, it must be that of presbyters. Should there be

1) See Œcumenius and Chrysostom in loco. and the schoolmen in Confut. of I. S. Cyprianic age, p. 147. See also Letters on the Fathers, p. 3.

2) Eph. 4: 11—14, and p. 33, &c.

3) 1 Tim. 3: 1, &c., and Titus 1: 6, &c.

4) Titus 1: 6, &c.

more orders than one, then, since the principal and chiefest function of the ministry is committed to presbyters, this order must rank as the first and highest. And the very fact, that, in after ages, prelates usurped this power of preaching to themselves, under the pretext of preventing heresies; and denied to presbyters this original power with which they were invested by the express authority of God; is proof strong as holy writ, of the introduction of a new order into the church, for the support of whose dignity, it became necessary to trample upon the instituted laws of God.[1]

§ 2. *Presbyters are divinely authorized to conduct the public worship of God.*

The second religious function which has been appropriated to the christian ministry, and which has always, says Potter, 'been reckoned an essential part of the sacerdotal office, is the offering to God the prayers of the church,' in the public celebration of divine worship.[2] 'Again,' he says, 'this has always been reckoned one chief duty of the sacerdotal office in the christian church.'[3] It is thus associated, as their two principal duties, by the apostles, with preaching, when they declare that they will give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' Acts, 6: 4.

Now that this function, as well as preaching, is inherent in the presbyterate as an order in the church, is unquestionable. The fact that it is so, as Potter himself proves, has never been questioned in the church. That presbyters officiated in this essential sacerdotal function, under immediate divine direction and apostolic sanction, this same writer also certifies. For he informs us, that 'the prophets and teachers at Antioch, whom he had previously declared to be presbyters, are said λειτουργειν τω κυριω, to minister to the Lord, and fast; where ministering to the Lord is meant of praying, as appears, not only because it is joined with fasting, but also because this and the like expressions are commonly used in that sense.'[4]

St. James directs the sick to call for the presbyters to pray and to intercede for them, with the promise of success. (Jas. 5: 14.) And the four and twenty presbyters in the Book of Revelations, who represent, says Potter,[5] the ministers of the

1) That this is a Popish doctrine, see Bellarmine de. Cler. capp. 13, 14. And that the English Church controverts this doctrine, see affirmed by Dr. Willet, Syn. Pap. contr. 52. 3. part 2, p. 232.

2) On Church Govt. p. 221.

3) Ibid, p. 223.

4) Ibid, p. 224–226, and King's Prim. Christ.

5) On the Church, pp. 223, 224.

christian church, are described as having golden vials full of incense, which is the prayers of the saints, and which it is their privilege to offer unto God. (Rev. 5: 8.) 'Feed the flock of God, which is among you,' says Peter, to the presbyters he addressed, 'taking the oversight thereof.' 1 Pet. 5: 2, 3. So also did the apostle Paul solemnly impose upon the Ephesian presbyters, whatever duties are involved 'in feeding the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers.' 'Therefore,' says the apostle, admonishing them of the coming dangers of the church, 'watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears.' Acts, 20: 31. The office of intercession, as the minister of Christ, in the public offering up of prayer, in the worship of God, which is the second essential function appropriated to the christian ministry, belongs, therefore, by divine right, to the presbyterate. And since it will be plain, to any one who will attentively read the apostolic records, that the apostles placed the essence of their ministry in the proclamation of the gospel, and in intercession with God,[1] presbyters, being fully empowered to discharge both these offices, as God shall enable them, are the successors of the apostles, in their most eminent gifts, as ordinary ministers of the church of Christ.

### § 3. *Presbyters are divinely authorized to baptize.*

The third branch of sacerdotal authority, the possession of which is believed to characterize the order of prelates, is the power of receiving members into the church of Christ, by baptism, which is the key of entrance, and the initiating ordinance of the christian church.

Now this power is expressly contained in that commission, by which the christian ministry was originally instituted, and of course, inheres in all who are authorized, by that charter, to labor in the ministry of the gospel. But as there is but one commission, and one order of duties, committed by it to those to whom it is addressed, it follows, that there can be but one order of ministers, as to all essential powers, whatever variety there may be among them from accidental qualities, or from human appointment. And since presbyters are, unquestionably, an order of divinely appointed ministers, all

1) See Acts, 6: 4; John, 21: 15; Acts, 20: 17–20, and 28: 31; Rom. 15: 16; 1 Cor. 3: 9–11, and 4: 1–2; 1 Cor. 9: 16, and 16: 10; 2 Cor. 5: 19, 20; 1 Tim. 2: 7, and 4: 6, 11, 16, and 5: 17, For prayer, see Rom. 1: 8–12, and 10: 1, and 15: 5, 6, 13, 30–33; 1 Cor. 1: 4–8; Eph. 1: 15–23, and 3: 14–21; Phil. 1: 8–11; Col. 1: 9–14; 1 Thess. 1: 2–4, &c., &c.

the powers expressed in this commission must be of divine right theirs. They are, therefore, empowered to 'go, and teach all nations, baptizing them.' Thus also our Saviour himself commissioned his disciples, both the seventy and the twelve, to baptize, as well as to preach, for 'Jesus baptized not, but his disciples.' John, 4 : 2. Now, as prelates will insist that these seventy were distinct from the twelve, in being presbyters, and not prelates, it follows, that even on prelatic principles, presbyters are competent to baptize. And this Hooker openly teaches, for he asserts that 'Christ himself consecrated seventy others of his own disciples, inferior presbyters, whose commission to preach and baptize was the same which the apostles had.'[1] Of course, if their commission was the same, their power also was the same. We read also, that St. Paul, when converted, was baptized by Ananias, whom some represent as one of these seventy, and therefore a presbyter; and others, one of the prophets, who, as we have seen, are also admitted to have been of the order of presbyters, and thus it would appear, that since the validity of baptism is essential to a valid consecration to the ministry, and since the greater number of churches in western christendom may trace their first original, directly or indirectly, to the apostle Paul, that, therefore, the validity of the ministry, as now existing in all these churches, must ultimately depend on the validity of presbyterial baptism, for that Ananias was an apostle, or of the order of prelates, is admitted to be impossible.[2]

It is also recorded that Philip — as Mr. Potter affirms even while a deacon — baptized the Samaritans, and the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts, 8: 12, 38. Now, if Philip was, at this time, no more than a deacon, and had not, as we believe, been ordained a presbyter since his consecration as a deacon, then it will follow, that if the power of administering baptism belongs to deacons, much more, certainly, must it be the rightful prerogative of presbyters. Thus, again, we are told in Acts, 18: 8, that 'many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.' But, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul reminds them, that he baptized only Crispus, and the household of Stephanus, 1 Cor. 1: 14, and therefore, these 'many' must have been baptized by his attendant ministers, who were not apostles, but presbyters. In his epistle to the Ephesians, 4: 5, the apostle exhorts them to 'walk worthy of that vocation, wherewith they had been called, even as they were called in one Lord, one faith, one

1) Eccl. Polity, B. v. § 77. 2) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 227.

baptism.' Now, as appears distinctly from Acts, 20: 28, the ministers, whom the apostle left at Ephesus, to feed the church of God, and take oversight thereof, were presbyters. Presbyters, therefore, received members into that church by the administration of baptism. It is also admitted, that, in some of the churches, as at Philippi, for some time, at least, after their organization, there were no other ministers ordained over them than presbyters, with the officers who were called deacons. But as it is plain no church could be organized, or collected together, without the administration of baptism, this ordinance must have been administered by presbyters.

But it is unnecessary to enlarge in proof of the inherent right of presbyters to baptize, since, however in after ages some prelates have endeavored to usurp, as exclusively theirs, this and all other ministerial powers, archbishop Potter grants, 'that, in the primitive ages, presbyters baptized as well as bishops, but the practice of the church has varied as to deacons.'[1] And, since it is at once evident, that all who believed, together with their children, have a right to be baptized, they who are authorized to disciple men, are, also, of necessity, competent to baptize them. The right of administering baptism being, therefore, another essential part of ministerial authority; and presbyters being plainly invested with it; presbyters, in this respect, also, are the successors of the apostles.

### § 4. *Presbyters are divinely authorized to administer the Lord's supper.*

We proceed to the consideration of the fourth branch of sacerdotal authority, to the exclusive possession of which prelates lay claim, and that is the administration of the Lord's supper, or, as they fondly term it, 'the consecration of the eucharistic sacrifice.' Now, that this power was resident in the presbyters of the apostolic churches, we might demonstrate, by a repetition of the arguments employed on the subject of baptism. For, as baptism and the Lord's supper are the two divinely instituted sacraments of the christian church, the one the ordinance of initiation, the other of confirmation, and both, the signs and seals of the covenant of grace; it is at once manifest, that he who is the appointed minister of the one ordinance, must be also competent to administer the other. 'The sacraments, being seals, annexed by Christ to

1) On Ch. Govt. see p. 227. See King's Prim. Christianity.

the word of his grace, and visible words, are evidently to be dispensed by those to whom the dispensation of the word is committed.'[1] In the Corinthian church, 'when no minister above the order of prophets, who were next below the apostles, was there, the eucharist was administered, nor was this power so strictly appropriated to the apostles, but that it might be lawfully executed by the ministers of the second order.'[2] Now, it is impossible to conceive a more formal or solemn investment with the power of administering this sacred ordinance, than that with which the apostle Paul clothes these Corinthian presbyters. 1 Cor. 11: 23–26. 'For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, &c. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he comes.' It is here apparent that this ordinance was to be perpetuated until the coming of Christ, and being intrusted to the administration of presbyters, presbyters must ever continue to enjoy the same power, unless it can be shown that it has been withdrawn by some special commission given to the order of prelates, which, with all our diligence, we have not yet found in the word of God.

That this power was exercised not only at Corinth, at Philippi, and in those churches where no force of construction can make out the appearance of a prelate; but, generally, also, in all the apostolic churches, is apparent, not only for the reasons already given, but also from what we read in Acts, 20: 7–11, where we are informed, that it was when the disciples were come together to break bread — as, we are to presume, they regularly did — the apostle preached unto them.

It is, therefore, plain, that, by the teaching of the word of God, it belongs to presbyters, as an order of the christian ministry, authoritatively to preach the gospel, and thus to call sinners to repentance; to offer up prayers in the congregations of the people, interceding on their behalf, with God most high; having instrumentally brought any to the knowledge of the truth, to receive them, and their infant seed, into the bosom of the christian church, by baptism; and also to administer to all who are fit and worthy recipients, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, for the increase and confirmation of their faith.

But they who are authorized to administer the sacraments, cannot, on prelatical principles, be two orders, but one; and

1) Corbet, on the Church, p. 38. 2) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 235.

since presbyters, as well as bishops, are thus entitled to officiate, presbyters and prelates are, and must be, on these principles, one and the same order. Thus speaks Johnson, in his Unbloody Sacrifice.[1] 'The eucharist is one, as offered by priests, who are one by their commission. It was upon this account that Ignatius, Cyprian, and others, represent the whole college of bishops throughout the whole world, as one person, sitting in one chair, attending one altar; and that, therefore, is the one eucharist, which is celebrated by this one priesthood.' There is, then, but one divinely commissioned order of ministers, which is that of presbyters, who must be, therefore, the only true and valid successors of the apostles. And thus much does bishop Sanderson allow, when he includes, under 'the ministerial power, which is common to bishops with their fellow-presbyters,' and which 'is confessed to be from heaven, and God,' 'the preaching of the word, and the administration of sacraments.'[2]

Since, then, as bishop Burnet argues, 'the sacramental actions are the highest of sacred performances, those that are empowered for them must be of the highest office in the church,'[3] and, therefore, presbyters must be the true and only successors of the apostles.

1) Part ii. chap. 3, Oxf. Tr. vol. iii. p. 157. See also 'Dodwell's One Priesthood,' One Altar.

2) On the Div. Right of the Episcop. in Anglican Fathers, vol. i. p. 305. See also 307.

3) See in Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 250.

# CHAPTER VI.

PRESBYTERS ARE CLOTHED, BY DIVINE RIGHT, WITH THE POWER OF ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

## § 1. *The power of jurisdiction explained.*

A FIFTH branch of spiritual authority claimed for prelates, is that which may be denominated the power of jurisdiction, discipline, or government, including whatever is necessary to the preservation of order, and the regulation of all affairs, within that society of christians denominated a church. As the former powers already treated of, are necessary to the due organization, and spiritual edification of the church, so is this essential to its oversight, to its external prosperity, and to the removal of whatever would lead to internal disorganization and injury. This power extends to the making of any regulations touching the worship and ordinances of God, which do not interfere with the authority of Christ, as expressed in his word, or which do not go to alter their nature, or to circumscribe them within any narrower limits than those which have been assigned by their divine author. It also applies to the enforcement of the laws of the church, whether these are of divine appointment, or of ecclesiastical origin, so far as these are framed according to the suggestions above specified. Whatever, therefore, is necessary to the incorporation of a christian church; to the government of its members; to the dispensation of its ordinances; to the infliction of its censures; or to the final excommunication of its obstinate offenders; all this is to be regarded as included under the power of spiritual jurisdiction, or, as it is called by divines of the olden times, the key of discipline.

§ 2. *Proofs that this power of jurisdiction belongs to presbyters by divine right.*

Now that this power also is ascribed to presbyters in the New Testament, we proceed to render proof. This power, as has been seen,[1] is certainly comprehended, in a summary manner, in the commission of our Lord. For, as all power was given unto him, so does he therein promise to be with his ministers unto the end of the world, in authoritatively enabling them to observe, and to enforce, whatsoever he has commanded. And if this commission is the warrant, as it is, by which presbyters hold their ministerial office, then must they be empowered with this authority of spiritual jurisdiction. When Peter confessed our Lord to be the son of God, Christ declared, that upon the high mystery which Peter had thus proclaimed, He would build his church. He, that is, Christ himself, being the chief corner stone; and that he would give to Peter, and to all others who should hereafter succeed him in this work of the minsitry, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that whatsoever they shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Matt. 16: 19. Now that this divine promise of spiritual jurisdiction was given, not to Peter personally, but to Peter representatively of the ministers of the church of Christ in all ages, is maintained most strenuously by all christian churches, the Romish alone excepted. But, in whatever way the assumed supremacy of Peter is disproved, as it most assuredly has been, the equally baseless supremacy claimed by prelates may be also overthrown. The learned Roman Catholic writer, Du Pin, affirms, 'that the ancient fathers, with a unanimous consent, teach, that the keys were given to the whole church, in the person of Peter.' 'This is the doctrine,' says Mr. Palmer,[2] 'of Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Optatus, Gaudentius, Ambrose, Augustine, Fulgentius, Theophylact, Eucherius, Bede, Rabanus Maurus, Lyranus, Hincmar, Odo, Petrus Blensens, and others innumerable.'[3] It was, in fact, the general doctrine of all the fathers, that these words were not addressed to Peter only, but to all the ministers of Jesus Christ. Tournely, Dupin, Natalis Alexander, and Launoy, quote Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, Basil, &c., in proof, that not only

1) See chap. iii.

2) Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 485.

3) Du Pin, De Antiq. Ecclesiæ Discipl. p. 309. Barrow, Treatise on Pope's supremacy, p. 587.

Peter, but all the apostles, and their successors, were commanded to feed the flock. Barrow adds the testimony of Cyprian, Cyril of Alexandria, and others, to the same effect.

'Our Lord's declaration, therefore,' to use the words of archbishop Whateley,[1] 'will amount to this, that the governors in each branch of the church which he founded — of the kingdom appointed to his disciples, with whom, and consequently with their successors, he promised to be always, even unto the end of the world — that these governors should have power to make regulations for the good government of that society, to admit, or refuse admission into it, and to establish such rules as they might think suitable, for the edification of its members, and their decorous worship of God; and that such regulations of Christ's servants on earth should be ratified, and sanctioned, by the authority of their unseen and spiritual master, should be bound in heaven by him.' This power of the keys is obviously the government of the kingdom of heaven, the opening and shutting the church. It is a figurative expression of that authority which is more clearly, but synonymously, expressed in our Lord's ascending commission, and elsewhere, and which he committed to the apostles, and to their successors in the ministry, to the end of the world. Matt. 16: 19, and 18: 18, and 19: 20. John, 20: 21 — 23. We are to understand, therefore, by the keys, that stewardly ministerial power with which christian teachers are intrusted, as keys were committed, as badges of power, to stewards, who were, in ancient times, appointed as overseers of the affairs of some extensive household. Thus are Christ's instituted ordinances, the preaching of the word, the administration of ordinances, and the infliction or remittance of censures, the keys, by the right use of which the gates of the church on earth, and of heaven itself, are opened or shut, to believers or unbelievers. With the power of administering these laws of the kingdom, Christ has invested his ministers, as stewards of the mysteries of God; (1 Cor. 4: 1,) so that, whatever spiritual jurisdiction is implied in these promises of Christ to his apostles, as representatives of all future ministers of the church, must necessarily descend to their successors, the ordinary, and standing teachers, by whom the churches were to be guided and upheld. Now the apostle declares most plainly, that 'God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, and these for helps and governments,' 1 Cor. 12: 28; thus teaching us

1) Whateley on Origin of Romish Errors, p. 171.

that the successors of the apostles are to be found in the prophets and teachers, who should be raised up for the help and government of the church. But, as we have already seen, it is admitted and insisted upon, by prelatists themselves, that these prophets and teachers were presbyters,[1] and that, in the church of Corinth, there was, at this time, no order above that of presbyters.[2] Presbyters, therefore, being the lineal successors of the apostles, and united with them in the foundation of the christian church, must be, of course, the perpetuators of that spiritual authority with which Christ has invested the rulers of his visible kingdom upon earth.

If a succession to the ordinary power and character of the apostles is at all necessary, or essential to the perpetuity of the church of Christ, it must be to the whole of that ordinary ministerial character, and not to a part merely; otherwise, only a part of it, and not the entire office, is of perpetual obligation, or necessity. But if the ruling, as well as the teaching, power of the apostles is a permanent gift to the church, then is it clear, that whoever is properly invested with the apostolic power of authoritatively teaching in the church of God, is, at the same time, clothed with the apostolic power of ruling. Indeed, pastoral ruling is by teaching, 'so that every authoritative church teacher is a pastor; for the pastor rules only by the spiritual sword, which is the word of God, and the discipline which he exercises is no more than the personal application of Christ's words, in his name to judge the impenitent, and absolve the penitent; and every authoritative teacher in Christ's name hath power to make such personal application of the word,'[3] and is therefore clothed with all ministerial power. For this power, in any case, is no more than declarative, and has no force if it be unjustly exercised, contrary to the mind of Christ, or, as it is said, *errante clave*.

It is altogether a vain figment of the prelatists, that the office of teaching and governing, in spiritual matters are distinct, the former belonging to presbyters, and the latter to prelates only. There is no such distinction in the nature of the case; in the law of Christ; in the ministerial commission; or in the apostolical records. They are part of the same office, and inseparably conjoined in scripture. Ruling is only as a means towards the better accomplishment of the chief end of the ministry, which is teaching; and he who is qualified

1) Potter on Ch. Govt. pp. 92, 101, 102, 103.
2) Ibid, p. 235.
3) Corbet on the Ch. p. 37. Lond. 1684. 4to. See also p. 39.

and called to teach, is thereby called and authorized to rule.[1] And that such spiritual authority was actually conferred upon presbyters, is made abundantly evident in the word of God. Every power which Christ has deputed to the officers of the church is included under three terms, ἡγέομαι, προΐστημι, ποιμαίνω, signifying to take the lead, to preside, and to fulfil the duties of a shepherd. Now each one of these terms is applied to presbyters in their official character. Thus the Hebrew christians are exhorted by the apostle 'to remember them that have the rule over them,' (ἡγουμένων;) and who were they? The apostle answers — 'who had spoken unto you the word of God.' They were therefore preachers. 'Obey,' he repeats, 'them that have the rule over you (ἡγουμένοις) for they watch for your souls as they that must give account. Here preaching and ruling, are associated as the inseparable and correlative functions of the same office of presbyter. 'Let the presbyters that rule well,' says Paul in his charge to Timothy, (οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες,) be counted worthy of double honor. (1 Tim. 5: 17. So also 1 Thes. 5: 12.)[2] Thus also Paul charges the Ephesian presbyters to take heed to themselves and to all the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them bishops, to feed, (ποιμαίνειν,) that is, govern, watch over, and rule the church of God,'[3] (Acts 20: 17. 28.) The presbyters who are among you, says the apostle Peter, 'I exhort, who am also a presbyter, feed, ποιμάνατε, the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, ἐπισκοποῦντες, that is, discharging the duties of bishops, not by constraint, but willingly . . . . neither as being lords, (or prelates, that is, aspiring to the dignity of a superior order,) over God's heritage,' (1 Pet. 5: 2, 3.)[4]

The apostles are further found, in the most distinct and unequivocal manner, attributing to presbyters the right of jurisdiction in the church of God, by applying to their office every term by which it was possible to express this function. The titles given by them to presbyters, are used to express the power of civil magistrates in the Greek translation of the Old Testament,[5] and in Greek writers generally. The very term presbyter was that by which civil rulers and elders in the gate were commonly designated.[6] The term guide or leader,

1) See Corbet on the Ch. p. 44. See Gillespie's Aaron's Rod, p. 272.

2) See this matter ably elucidated by Dr. Mason in his Wks. vol. iii. p. 108, and also in Plea for Presbytery, p. 186.

3) So the Greek scholars say.

4) See ibid. pp. 286, 270.

5) Numb 31: 14; Judg. 9: 28; Kings. 1: 15.

6) Judg. 8: 14; Ruth 4: 2, 3; 2 Sam. 5: 3; 1 Chron. 11: 3.

which is also given to presbyters,[1] was another title of civil rulers.[2] The title of president is also applied to presbyters,[3] and was used by Thucydides, Demosthenes, Herodotus, Plato, and others, for the rulers of cities, armies, and kingdoms, and implies similar authority in the church, which is the city of the living God, and Christ's spiritual kingdom.[4] So that if any wisdom, foresight, or design, may be justly ascribed to the inspired writers, in the selection of their titles of office — and who can question this without impeaching the wisdom of God? — then must we believe that presbyters are clothed with the power of ministerial jurisdiction.[5]

§ 3. *Proofs that presbyters exercised the power of jurisdiction, under divine sanction.*

The same thing is taught us by recorded facts. Presbyters are not merely enrobed in all the titled dignity of ministerial power, but are represented as acting in the capacity of rulers; and as those who ranked next to the apostles, and to whom, therefore, their power, as ordinary ministers, descends. Indeed, it was because the apostles did not wish to govern alone, that they divided the government of the church, which hitherto they had exercised alone, with tried men who formed a presiding council of presbyters, similar to what had always existed in the Jewish synagogue:[6] presbyters were thus appointed for this very purpose of taking a lead in government.[7] Thus when the collections for the poor saints were sent up to Jerusalem, they were handed in to the presbyters, who presided in the absence of the apostles,[8] and acted in their name, and not to any superior officer.[9] Thus also when certain teachers from Jerusalem had excited controversy in the churches of Asia, and when Paul and Barnabas had

1) Josh. 13: 21; Deut. 1: 13; Micah. 3: 9; 2 Chron. 5: 1; Acts, 7: 10, &c. &c.

2) Heb. 13: 7, 17, 24.

3) Rom. 12: 8; 1 Thes. 5: 12; 1 Tim. 5: 17.

4) See Stephanus's Thes. in verbo.

5) Saravia distinctly admits, that the very term presbyter 'denotes in the New Testament, the rulers of the church of Christ,' otherwise called bishops, and by many other names, all implying rule. See on the Priesthood, pp. 112, 113.

6) Neander's Hist. of the Planting of Christ'y, vol. i. p. 41. See also Milman's Hist. of Christ. vol. ii. p. 76. 'In his absence the government and even instruction of the church, devolved upon the senate of elders.' 'The presbyters were in their origin, the ruling powers of the young communities.' Ibid, pp. 72 and 74, also Goode's Div. Rule of faith, vol. ii. p. 65.

7) Ibid, p. 42.

8) See Lord Barrington, in Wks. vol. ii. pp. 165, 175.

9) Acts, 11: 30.

no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined, that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and presbyters, about this question.'[1] To presbyters, as next to the apostles in wisdom and authority, was this important question submitted. Thus were presbyters associated in council with the apostles, and allowed with them ministerially to legislate for the whole church.[2] The decree of this first synod, was given in the name of 'the apostles, presbyters, and brethren,' or the other delegated members, who sat as representatives of the churches.[3] Neither is there here any reference to any other possible officers, as successors to the apostles, than presbyters; for when this decree was to be proclaimed to the churches, Barnabas and Saul, together with Judas and Silas, who were prophets, and therefore presbyters, were authorized to make it known.[4]

We find presbyters also exercising the highest power of jurisdiction, that is, excommunication. For in writing to the Corinthian church, the apostle requires the presbyters of that church to excommunicate the incestuous member. 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,' says he, 'when ye, (that is, the πλειονων, the many,[5]) are gathered together, and (in) my spirit, (that is, with the power of the keys communicated to you, as presbyters, by me, and thus) with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan.'[6] That there were many separate congregations at Corinth, may be made to appear highly probable from the multitude of members in the church;[7] from the number of its pastors;[8] from the churches there being spoken of in the plural number;[9] and from other circumstances.[10] That these several congregations were under one united presbyterial government, would also appear, for they are spoken of as one church.[11] Now the apostle evidently censures these presbyters for having neglected their duty, and the necessary exercise of that power with which they were intrusted, by his gift, and the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.[12] 'Do not ye,'

1) Acts 15: 2.
2) Acts 15: 4, 6, 22, 23.
3) As no one place could have held all the believers in Jerusalem, these brethren must have been representatives.
4) Acts 15: 25, 28, 32, and 16: 4, and Gillespie's Aaron's Rod &c. p. 304.
5) See 2 Cor. 2: 6.
6) 1 Cor. 5.
7) Acts, 18: 7, 8, 9, 10.
8) 1 Cor. 14: 29.
9) 1 Cor. 13: 34.
10) See Eccl. Catechism, by the author.
11) 1 Cor. 1: 1. See Jus. Div. Regiminis Eccl.
12) 2 Cor. 2: 2, 12.

he asks these presbyters, 'judge them that are within?'[1] that is, who are members of the church; and why have you not, therefore, exercised this juridical authority in the present case? And when they had proceeded to exercise their power, the apostle speaks of their sentence as inflicted 'by the many' members of this consistorial court. It was not inflicted by all, and therefore, not by the church generally. It was inflicted by many, and, therefore, not by any single prelate. It was inflicted by Paul's spirit, or the authority ministerially conveyed by him in ordination, and therefore by the presbyters, since Paul himself was a presbyter. It was inflicted with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in virtue, therefore, of that authority, which he has delegated in perpetuity to the ministers of his church. And as the apostle did not feel warranted in pronouncing this sentence himself, although shamefully neglected by the church — as prelates would certainly have done — but requires the presbytery to execute the sentence, we are given to understand, that it is the prerogative of the presbyters of any given church, and of them alone, to excommunicate members; and that to them alone has the power of jurisdiction been transmitted in the church.[2] This interpretation of this passage is fully sustained by Mr. Thorndike, an eminent authority among prelatists. 'It must be acknowledged,' he says, 'that the apostle writeth to them to see his sentence published, ratified, and executed, which the presbyters there had either neglected to do, as was touched afore, or perhaps, were not able to bring the people under the discipline of Christ's kingdom; *which must needs oblige the apostle to interpose.*' The apostle evidently shows that while he had already fully made up his own judgment in the case, (1 Cor. v: 18,) he did not consider it within his jurisdiction, but as necessarily appertaining to the government of the presbyters; 'for what have I to do,' says he, 'to judge those that are without' the compass of my sphere; 'do not ye judge those that are within?' (v: 12.) Thus also did he deliver himself in his epistle to the Galatians, (v: 12,) saying: 'I *would* they were cut off that trouble you;' where, although the apostle desired the excommunication of certain persons, he nevertheless felt, that by his own and sole author-

1) 1 Cor. 5: 13.

2) See this important case fully discussed in Gillespie's Aaron's Rod Blossoming, pp. 278, 423. Brown's Vind. of Presb. Ch. Govt. p. 85, &c. Div. Right of Ch. Govt. pp. 104, 196, —198. Rutherford's Plea for Paul's Presb. p. 171. Henderson's Rev. and Consid. 322, 356, 357. Rutherford's Due Right of Presb. 80, &c. Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 140, 141. Estius in Pool's Synopsis in loco.

ity, he could not accomplish his desire, seeing that the Galatians were fully organized under their proper authorities.

In like manner does he call upon the members of the church at Thessalonica, 'to know them that are over them in the Lord, and admonish them,' that is, the presbyters, who had been regularly placed over them, according to the divine commission; and 'to be at peace among themselves.'[2] Even when the apostle found it necessary, in order to complete the permanent organization of the churches, to send to them Timothy and Titus, he calls their attention to this point, saying, 'rebuke not a presbyter, but entreat him as a father.'[3] That is, the established presbyters of these churches were to be regarded by Timothy and Titus as their fathers, who were to be treated by them with all that deference and regard which they had ever received at the hands of the apostles. They were not, therefore, to do any thing in contrariety to their views, by the force of authority; but by entreaty and persuasion they were to endeavor to bring them to correct opinions.[4] In the same spirit does he caution Timothy on the subject of ordination; 'lay hands,' says the apostle, 'suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins.'[5] Timothy is here reminded of the great importance of ordination as the gate of entrance into the ministry. He was, therefore, to use every effort to guard it well against all improper approaches. But still he was not to assume any authoritative dictation over the other presbyters, or to attempt to hinder them in the exercise of their rightful powers. But this much he was to do. Should they insist on ordaining any individual rashly or wrongly, he was not to unite in the work, and thus partake in their sins, but by withholding his hands he was to bear a testimony against their evil course. 'These things, therefore,' says the apostle, 'I write unto thee that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,' and therefore not to be lorded over by any prelatical despots, who 'say they are apostles and are not,' and much less by one so young as Timothy was.

The same conclusion must be drawn from 1 Cor. 14:29, where it is said, 'the spirits of the prophets, (who were presbyters,) are subject to the (rest of the) prophets.'[6] It is hence

1) Barrow on Pope's Supr. Supp. 5. Lect. ii. p. 187, 4to. ed. See Powell, p. 299. ed. second.
2) 1 Thess. 5:12, 13.
3) 1 Tim. 5:1.
4) See Jameson's Sum of the Ep. Contr. p. 101.
5) 1 Tim. 5:22.
6) Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. i. p. 84.

to be inferred, that there were several presbyters in all the primitive churches, who were united together for the common government of their churches, and that every individual among them was subject to the advice, instructions, commands, and censures of the body.[1] To this body the government of the church was committed by the apostles, under their general superintendence and advice as inspired men. This superintendence they exercised in their extraordinary character, and with such extraordinary gifts, its possibility ceased. Having perfected the body of Christ, and prepared it for the ordinary ministry, the office of the apostles terminated.[2] Apostles were no longer given. Evangelists were no longer sent out with plenipotentiary powers. And prophets, so far as they were gifted with foreknowledge, forever ceased. Thus the government and direction of the church devolved upon the 'pastors and teachers,' who are, it is allowed, the same order as presbyters. These ministers were every where ordained by these extraordinary officers, and empowered to succeed them, in every ecclesiastical function. Nay, what is more conclusive still, they exercised these functions during the very life-time of the apostles; by their injunction; and under their sanction; and were instructed to commit the same powers to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also.[3] And thus do we find the apostles, Peter and Paul, in their last farewell visits and solemn injunctions, given to the churches in the knowledge of their approaching death, explicitly delegating these powers, and the whole oversight and episcopal superintendence of the churches, to presbyters, without any manner of allusion to the possible existence of such an order as prelates.'[4] And in so doing, they doubtless had in remembrance the directions given by our Saviour for the future government of his church,[5] and in which, by a reference to the existing forms of the synagogue, where all cases of discipline were determined by the common council of presbyters, he instructed his disciples, that in the church also, the power of jurisdiction, according to his laws, should be vested in the hands of a similar presbytery.[6]

1) This fact is asserted by Dr. Vaughan, in his recent work, 'Congregationalism,' (see pp. 205, 206,) as applying universally to the primitive churches.

2) See above.

3) See above.

4) See Acts, 20:25, 27, 28, 29; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 1, 13, 14; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

5) Matt. 18:15.

6) See Gillespie's Aaron's Rod, pp. 400–403, where may be seen a host of authorities for this interpretation. Also, Paget's Power of Classes and Synods, and Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 186.

## § 4. *Objections answered.*

From this examination into the condition of the church during the apostolic age, it appears beyond a doubt certain, that presbyters were clothed with the powers of jurisdiction. But this fact can be further substantiated by testimony from a later period. Before, however, offering this, it is necessary to notice some objections, by which it is thought our conclusion is destroyed. One is, that the apostles exercised discipline in churches over which presbyters were established, and, therefore, were a superior order, to be perpetuated in the church. But to this it may be replied, that the only cases wherein discipline was thus exercised, relate but to one single apostle, and are not, therefore, characteristic of the practice of all the rest.[1] Again, the cases referred to, in connection with this single apostle, occurred in only two out of some hundreds of the churches, of which mention is made in the New Testament; and must, therefore, be regarded as extraordinary and not as implying the general rule. The apostle interfered, in these cases, evidently *as an apostle*, and not as a prelate. As a prelate he could not, since, as it regards the case of the church at Corinth, at the very time alluded to, Timothy must have been present, and yet he, as is affirmed, was himself a prelate, (1 Cor. 4:17.) Besides, the case here referred to was one requiring, in the judgment of the apostle, the exercise of that supernatural power, which he, by his extraordinary office, possessed, (1 Cor. 5:5.) The apostle being, also, the founder of the Corinthian church, was of course called upon to interfere. And yet, in doing so, he implies that the exercise of discipline to the extent of excommunication, was customary in this very church, and should, on this occasion, have been enforced at Corinth, even as it was in the other churches, by the agency of their own presbyters,[2] without the intervention of apostolic authority, (2 Thess. 3:14.)

This case, then, of the church at Corinth, is plainly an unusual one, and considering the incipient organization of the church, the interposition of apostolic authority was manifestly necessary and proper, notwithstanding that the ministers there possessed the right of discipline, since they were wanting in the present ability or courage necessary to carry it into execution. But even in this case, as we have seen, the

1) Barnes' Episc. Ex'd. p. 116.

2) See Acts, 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3; Heb. 13:7; 1 Thess. 5:12.

apostle did not himself exercise the discipline or execute the sentence, but merely denounced the crime, pronounced the penalty it deserved, and should receive, and then required the church to see it carried into effect. 'Purge ye out the old leaven,' 'do not ye judge them that are within, therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.' It is here, as Whitby allows, the apostle alludes to the sentence of excommunication, and here, even while bishop Timothy was present, he refers the whole case to the church, acting by its own ecclesiastical authority. And thus he afterwards speaks of it, when consummated as 'the punishment inflicted by many,' (2 Cor. 2:6.) not *before* (πρὸ) but *by* (ὑπὸ) many, and, therefore, not by Timothy alone, or by the apostle alone, but by all the ministers referred to in 1 Cor. 12:28, 29, and in the presence of the people. And whereas Paul delivers the criminal over to Satan, this was done by virtue of his miraculous power to inflict corporal punishment, and was not the ecclesiastical censure inflicted by the church. The apostle thus enforced the sentence authoritatively inflicted by the teachers, with the consent of the people; but when he afterwards heard of the penitence of the offender, he first urges the church to forgive and restore him, and *then* intimates that he also would withdraw his inflicted penalty. In this interpretation Whitby concurs, and the ancients generally, including Theodoret, Chrysostom, and Theophylact.[1]

The only other case in which this interposition of apostolic authority is alleged, is that of Hymeneus and Alexander, whom the apostle delivered unto Satan, (1 Tim. 1:20.) But this also was evidently not an ordinary, but an extraordinary case, implying miraculous agency. And, if it occurred at Ephesus while Timothy was there, and is here introduced in a charge sent to Timothy, if it proves anything in the matter at all, it is that the exercise of discipline was *exclusively* an apostolic prerogative, and that *prelates* had as little interest in it as *presbyters*, since Timothy, the very prince of prelates, was here restrained from its exercise.[2] But this case, like the preceding, is manifestly to be considered as an exercise of the miraculous and extraordinary authority of the apostle, which could not possibly be delegated to any class of men.

1) See Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 212. See this interpretation vindicated by Cartwright, Refut. Rhem. 1 Cor. 5:4; by Parker, Pol. Eccl. l. iii. c. 4, p. 17, &c.; by Willet, Contr. Cent. i.; by Fulke, Answ. to Rhem. 1 Cor. 5, 4; by Zanchius in præcep. 4, c. 10, p. 688; by Pet. Martyr, 1 Cor. 5; by Bucer, de Regn. Christ. l. i. c. 9; and so also by Polanus, Dr. Field, Paræus, Zwinglius, &c. See also Sion's Royal Prerogative, Amsterdam, 1641, p. 10.

2) See this point fully discussed in Barnes's Episc. Examined, p. 126.

It is not true, therefore, that the apostles appropriated the power of excommunication to themselves. For they planted many churches, which they never again visited, in which this power must have been exercised by the presbyters ordained in every church; nor can one single instance be produced, where the apostles did excommunicate any person, in any church thus settled and supplied with pastors. It is still more baseless to assert, that the apostles delegated this power to an order of diocesan prelates, since no such prelates can be pointed out for the first two centuries, in any christian church, and since even after the distinctions of prelacy had arisen, this power was still exercised by presbyters.[1]

That the cases to which we have alluded were extraordinary, and were manifestations of the supreme apostolic power, is still further evinced by the general course pursued by these same apostles. They were certainly employed, during a great portion of their time, in discharging the ordinary duties of the ministry. In every possible way they identified themselves with presbyters. They frequently applied to themselves this name, and spoke of presbyters as their fellow ministers and co-workers.[2] Between the false Judaizing teachers, who utterly denied his apostleship, and his claims, and himself; the apostle Paul calls the Gentile converts, to be judges of the validity of his ministerial authority.[3] The apostles certainly united with presbyters in the synod of Jerusalem, as fellow members, and so conducted themselves throughout that whole meeting as to make it manifest that they acted not as apostles, with a transcendent and infallible authority, but as presbyters, and as a pattern to all future assemblies.[4] From the history of this synod, it is most clear, that Paul and Barnabas had not undertaken to decide the matter in dispute in the church at Antioch, by their own authority, but had, on the contrary, argued and debated the matter with them, and conducted themselves as fellow presbyters with the prophets and teachers there. They were also sent by that church to Jerusalem as ordinary officers, and received from it instructions and authority, as did the other presbyters sent with them. They were thus delegated as ordinary presbyters, to unite in a common council with the other apostles, presbyters, and

1) See Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 215, 216, where proofs are given See also Neander's Hist. of the First Plan of Christ'y, vol i. p. 170.

2) See chap. iv.

3) Ep. to Galatians. See Taylor's Process of Hist. Proof, p. 157.

4) See this point fully considered in Bastwick's Utter Routing, &c. p. 426, &c.

brethren. Throughout the whole discussion — for the whole matter was debated — the presbyters acted as authoritatively as the apostles, (Acts, 15:6, 22, 23.) And the final decree was given in the name of the presbyters, as much as of the apostles, who, indeed, in so many words, declare, '*we* have written and concluded,' (Acts, 21:1.) thus completely identifying themselves with the presbyters. From all which it is evident, that the apostles, except when employed by Christ as infallible and inspired founders of the church, acted as ordinary officers. They always professed complete subjection to the word of God as revealed to them by inspiration, or in the Old Testament, so that when Peter swerved from that rule, Paul resisted him to the face. Their very movements, as inspired apostles, were directed by the Holy Spirit.[1] They were accountable to the presbytery at Jerusalem, by which even Peter was questioned,[2] and required to give satisfaction. To this presbytery the other apostles were also subject, and gave an account of their labors, and of the doctrines preached by them while on their missionary tours. Paul, on different occasions, thus reported himself, and made known his doctrinal sentiments.[3] He received orders from the presbytery of Jerusalem,[4] and was ruled by them. The apostles disclaimed all lordship over the other churches also. They paid them all respect and deference in the Lord. They became all things to them. They were willing to be employed, at any time, as their agents in the accomplishment of their will. Thus Peter and John were sent to Samaria;[5] Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, and from thence to Antioch, Syria, and Galatia. They thus preached, not themselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord, and regarded themselves as the servants of the church for Jesus' sake.[6] It is also susceptible of the clearest proof, that under the very eye of the apostles, the several congregations in Jerusalem were united together under the government of a presbytery. This pattern was followed at Ephesus, at Corinth, at Rome, and, we may believe, every where else.[7] To presbyteries the apostles every where committed the whole oversight and management of the churches. So that, on the whole, we may be well assured, that the power of jurisdiction was designed to reside ordinarily and permanently in the order of presbyters, and

1) Acts, 16.
2) Acts, 11.
3) See Lord Barrington's Essay on the Apostles.
4) Acts, 21.
5) Acts, 8.
6) 2 Cor. 4:5; 1 Cor. 3:21, 23; Gal. 1:7, 8; 2 Cor. 10th, and 11th.
7) See the author's Eccl. Catechism, ch. iv. § 4, &c., and Bastwick, ibid, this is the subject of nearly his whole volume.

that these are the true successors to the apostles, though not apostles in the special meaning of that term.

§ 5. *The apostles were not prelates of the churches founded by them, but these churches were presided over by one of their own presbyters, chosen by themselves, as appears from numerous passages.*

But we must notice one other objection to our argument, the assertion, namely, that the apostles acted during their lives as the prelates of the several churches, and that all the power exercised by presbyters was in subordination to them. This objection cannot be sustained. It is contrary to the very nature and design of the apostolic office, that the apostles should act as fixed officers or prelates over any church; the general superintendency which was a part of their extraordinary functions, being inconsistent with every essential characteristic of prelates, who are *fixed* officers, and of whom there can be only one in any given church, according to the ancient canons.[1] The apostles, therefore, could not possibly act as prelates of all the churches they founded; whilst in their extraordinary and general oversight and control, they never can have any successors.[2] Besides, if the apostles, during their lives, continued to exercise these prelatic functions, it follows, of necessity, that there could be no such thing as prelates appointed until their death, and none afterwards, since there were none left to appoint them. Timothy, and Titus, and the whole host of aspirants after official preëminence, are thus at once denuded of their honors, whilst the angels of the churches dwindle into stars of the second magnitude, and shine forth as the simple presbyters of the churches.

But what is worst of all, we have found that one of the very last acts of these apostles was to commit into the hands of presbyters the office of the episcopate and the entire government of the churches. It admits of no question that presbyters are said to exercise the episcopate.[3] This was the course pursued by the apostle Paul, by Peter, and also by the apostle John, as appears from the Book of Revelation; for, as he was then living, the epistles to the seven churches must have been addressed to their presbyters, he being still their only prelate.

1) See these views extended in Lect. on the Apost. Succ. Lect. x.

2) See ibid.

3) 2 Pet. 5: 1, 2; Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ, p. 220; Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 115; Eng. ed. Stilling. Iren. p. 286; King's Prim. Ch. p. 79.

And thus does it appear, to the utter confusion and dismay of all hierarchists, that the apostles devolved the whole succession of their ordinary power and jurisdiction upon presbyters. Accordingly we find that the churches, acting upon the full belief that no other order of ministers were to be ever established, than that instituted by the apostles, namely, presbyters, proceeded to organize themselves into presbyteries, and to elect their own presidents for the better management of business, and the more efficient completion of all their plans.

Such is the view given of the apostolic churches by archbishop Potter, who allows that there was a college of presbyters ordained over the church of Jerusalem, who were plainly concerned in the care of the church.[1] 'Our fourth proposition,' says Grotius, 'is this, that *this* episcopacy is approved by divine law, or, as Bucer says, it seemed good to the Holy Ghost that one *among the presbyters* should be charged with a peculiar care.'[2]

In the absence of the apostles, the presbyters, as we have seen, were accustomed to preside in the church at Jerusalem.[3] The presbyters of the church of Antioch must also have had one of their number to act as president when they were assembled together for the ordination of Barnabas and Saul.[4] Such appears to have been the general practice of the churches, in all of which, according to the necessity of the case, there were a plurality of presbyters, one of their number being elected to preside in their councils: a custom which is still maintained in all its original simplicity by presbyterians.

A plurality of bishops, presbyters, or governors, says Blondel, existed at one and the same time, in one and the same church. He further supposes that these pastors, or bishops, were all indued with equal power and honor; that the eldest minister, by virtue of his seniority, was constantly the moderator among his colleague presbyters; that this moderator was subject to the power of the presbytery, and obeyed its commands, with no less submission than did the meanest of their number; and that while he had chief power in the college, he had properly no power *over* it or independently of it.[5]

That officers of this kind might be expected in the apostolic

1) On Ch. Govt. c. 3, p. 107, Eng. edition.

2) Sacra, c. 11.

3) See Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. pp. 165, 175. Also Benson on the Relig. Worship of the Christians, c. 3, § 2, p. 83.

4) Acts, 13: 1, &c. See ch. vii.

5) Apol. Præfat. pp. 6, 7, 18, 35. See Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 231, 232, vol. ii. pp. 77, 78. See also Goode's Divine Rule of Faith, ch. viii. This writer denies that any thing more can be proved from scripture or from primitive antiquity.

churches would appear from the fact that such chairmen, presidents, or moderators, are necessary in all assemblies, where several have a right to speak, and are therefore constantly appointed. There was, we know, such an order of presidents among the presbyters who managed, in common, the ecclesiastical affairs of the synagogue.[1] These are several times introduced to our notice in the sacred volume, as presiding in the Jewish synagogues, and as giving liberty to preach.[2] And it would appear to be very probable, that Peter was president, chairman, or speaker in the college of the apostles,[3] and also in the church of Jerusalem, in which the twelve apostles acted conjointly, and among whom, until their dispersion, Peter *probably* acted as moderator.[4]

Such officers, therefore, would naturally suggest themselves to the apostolic churches, especially as our Saviour had directed them to the synagogue for their exemplar.[5] And when we consider the variety of gifts then enjoyed by the church, and the number who would have a consequent right to speak, and how much of the edification of the church depended on the order with which such persons spoke, judged, prophesied, prayed, sung, and exercised their gifts generally, we will understand how necessary and useful this office then was in all their meetings.[6] Such an officer was no less important for the hearing and deciding of all the controversies about worldly matters which arose among the brethren; to give advice in all difficult cases;[7] to watch over the general order; to guard against abuses; to admonish the faulty; and to guide the public deliberations.[8] In the beginning, therefore, one of the bishops or presbyters presided, under the title of *proestos*, *senior probatus*, &c., that is, the president or approved elder. In the second century they began to give this officer exclusively the title of bishop, calling the other bi shops presbyters or

1) See this position fully sustained by Vitringa de Vet. Synagog. lib. iii. c. 9, p. 727, &c. Reland's Antiq. Jennings' Jewish Antiq. vol. ii. pp. 54, 55. b. ii. c. 1. Also in Gillespie's Ch. of Scotl. part i. c. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, and in a Confut. of I. S. Vind. of the Princ. of the Cypr. Age, p. 151. Baxter's Treatise on Episcopacy, p. 13, § 19.

2) Acts, 13 : 15; Luke, 13 14; Acts, 18 : 8 and 17.

3) Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 7, p. 72.

4) Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ordin. part ii. p. 88, and elsewhere.

5) Matt. 18.

6) Lord Barrington's Wks, vol. i. pp. 85, 86. The same view is presented by Forbes, in his Irenicum, pp. 242, 243, 245. In Baxter on Episc. p. 70.

7) See Macknight's Com. on 1 Tim. 5 : 17, vol. iii. p. 205, where the duties of such an officer are fully described. Benson, in his Essay on the Public Worship of the Early Christians, very fully establishes the fact of such presiding officers. See Paraphrase on St. Paul's Epistles, pp. 117, 119. c. 3. § 1. § 3. and § 6.

8) Neander's Hist. of the First Plant. of Christ'y. vol. i. pp. 169, 170.

elders, to distinguish them from the stated president.[1] In this way the scriptures and the primitive fathers are harmonized, and the gradual introduction of the doctrine of prelacy is made apparent and easy, the prelate being the chief presbyter, and the other presbyters his colleagues.[2]

Allusion appears to be made to such presidents or moderators, in several passages of the New Testament. They are referred to in that passage already considered, where the apostle says, 'the spirits of the prophets (that is, says lord Barrington, of some of the prophets) are subject to the (other) prophets.'[3] 'It is most natural to think the full meaning of this place to be that the spirits of the prophets, who prophesied or exhorted, were, when duly regulated, subject to the prophets who presided.'[4] Spiritual gifts, as we know, were very generally bestowed upon the members of the church of Corinth.[5] Their possessors, as we are also informed, were apt to put the public assemblies into confusion by their disorderly exercise; by their strife and emulation; and by all speaking together, and in unknown tongues.[6] The apostle, therefore, directs that they should speak one by one; that whilst one spake the others should sit still and judge; and that the spirits of those who were led to exercise their gifts, should be subject to those who presided.

The Thessalonians also enjoyed a large measure of these spiritual gifts,[7] and stood in need of the same wise direction. We learn, too, that there was a synagogue in Thessalonica,[8] and that some of the Jews received the gospel, and united in forming a christian church, in connection with a great multitude of those Gentiles who had become proselytes of the gate, and worshippers of the one only and true God.[9] It is also probable, that their teachers were converts from Judaism, or, at least, proselyted Gentiles. But if so, they had been all accustomed to the ecclesiastical government of a number of presbyters, with a president who moderated their proceedings, and would naturally, therefore, adopt this plan as the policy of their church. Some of the church, however, appear to have refused to subject themselves to their teachers, and to this plan of discipline, and gave themselves up to disorder, and confu-

1) See Boyse's Anct. Episcopacy, Pref., p. ix. and Neander's Hist. of the First Plant. of Christ'y, pp. 169, 170. Also Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 77.

2) Benson on Relig. Worship of Christians. c. 3. § 6. p. 95.

3) 1 Cor. 14: 32.

4) Lord Barrington's Wks. p. 84.

5) See the Epistles.

6) 1 Cor. c. 14.

7) Acts, 17: 4; 1 Thess. 5: 19–21; Barrington, p. 84

8) Acts, 18: 1.

9) Acts, 17.

sion, under the pretence of edifying others. The apostle, therefore, beseeches them to 'know,' reverence, and respect, 'those that labor among them,' as their stated ministers, 'and are over (or preside over) you,' that is, says Doddridge, those 'who preside over your assemblies, and moderate in them.'[1] In this way, the apostle admonishes them to 'be at peace among themselves,' and 'to warn them that are unruly,' or disorderly, proudly refusing, like soldiers who will not keep their ranks or know their colors, to concur with the arrangements of their overseers. The apostle here appears to distinguish the presbyters into three classes, 1, those who labored, that is, for the extension of the church by the conversion of Jews and Gentiles; 2, those who presided or governed in all its domestic services and worship; and 3, those who, while the others presided and governed, were employed in the instruction and admonition of the assembled christians. He therefore in effect exhorted them, 'to take care that their presbyters be supplied with every necessary, first of all those among them who, with all their might, labored to propagate the faith of Christ in the country around, and in the next place those who governed the church, and admonished and instructed them by their voice and example.'[2]

Allusion is probably made to the same office, in the epistle to the church at Rome, which was in a great measure composed of converted Jews or proselytes, who then swarmed in Rome. For in reference to the diversity of spiritual gifts, and the various modes of ministry which they occasioned, the apostle says, 'he that ruleth let him do it with diligence.'[3] The original word (προϊσταμενος,) means, unquestionably, 'he who presides,' and refers to ecclesiastical office. Some of the presbyters were teachers, and others rulers, or presidents, according to their gifts. Those that were called to exercise the office of ruler or president, were required to do it with attention and zeal. The word, which thus plainly refers to ecclesiastical office, and to some office of presidency in the church, is as certainly used in 1 Thess. 5 : 12, and in 1 Tim. 3 : 4, 12, to designate those who held the office of teacher. And hence it would appear, that in the apostolic churches there were those, who held the double office of teacher, and governor or president.[4]

A similar allusion is made in 1 Cor. 12 : 28, where the

1) In loco. Note.
2) Mosheim Comment. on the Aff. of Christ. before Constantine, vol. i. pp. 217, 218, Vidal.
3) Rom. 12 : 8.
4) See Stuart's Comment. in loco.

apostle, in an enumeration of the same diversified ministers, both extraordinary and ordinary, speaks of governments (κυβερνησεις) as corresponding to those that preside, or rule. This word, also, means guidance, direction, steering, as in the case of the pilot of a ship. Hence, many critics understand it here, as designating the office of a ruler, or president, in the church. Nor can we see any strength in the objection urged against this interpretation, founded on the low place the office is made to assume, seeing it was but the exercise of the office of teacher, already mentioned, in this particular way of occasional, or stated superintendence and direction. It is, therefore, purposely classed by the apostle among the lowest offices, and such as were mutable, that it might not be exalted into a distinct and separate order, or be supposed to imply prerogatives superior to those of the teachers in general.[1]

The same allusion would appear to be made by the apostle, in writing to the Hebrew converts, throughout the world, 'Remember them who have the rule over you, (ηγουμενους,) and who have spoken unto you the word of God.' 'Obey them that have the rule over you, (τοις ηγουμενοις,) and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account.'[2]

That there was such a distinction among the presbyters of the same church, is, however, placed beyond controversy, by the explicit statement of the apostle, in 1 Tim. 5: 17. 'Let the presbyters who rule well, (οι καλως προεστωτες,) that is, who preside well,[3] directing and managing the public worship, and the other interests of the church, be counted worthy of double honor, (or stipend,) especially they who (besides these duties, continue zealously to) labor in word and doctrine.' It here appears that there were two departments in which presbyters might render service to the church: they might be especially devoted to the business of teaching and preaching, or they might be appointed presidents, (προεστωτες,) *standing over, taking care of, serving and moderating the*

1) This is the main objection of Stuart, who gives one view in his text, and the opposite in an elaborate excursus. Our view of this passage, is that taken by Mr. Thorndike, who says, 'Those of the presbyters who preached not, are here called by the apostle *governments*, and the deacon's helps, or assistants, to the government of presbyters; so that it is not to be translated helps in governments, but helps and governments,' since 'there were two sorts of the presbyter's office in teaching and governing, the one, whereof, some attained not, even in the apostles times.' Prim. Govt. in Jameson's Cyp. p. 550.

2) Heb. 13: 1, and 17.

3) Barrington's Wks. vol. i. p. 87, vol. ii. p. 165. Doddridge, in loco.

*councils* of the church; so, that, whilst teaching and preaching, they might also in their turn, or when so required, act as presidents, or moderators. It is thus, that Maimonides, in his work on the Sanhedrim, describes the bishop of the synagogue, to which the apostle here, doubtless alludes, as 'the presbyter who labored in word and doctrine,'[1] employing, as it were, the very words of the apostle, and proving that the same presbyter who taught, might also preside, or rule.[2] Hence, Neander says, 'that while all the ministers of the synagogue were called πρεσβυτεροι, those who presided were called, among other names, by this very title of προεστωτες των αδελφων.[3] Milton also shows, that προεστως is nothing else than presiding presbyter.[4]

All presbyters, it is to be observed, were thus officially entitled to rule or preside, and at first they may have done so alternately, since they are always spoken of in the plural, until the rule was adopted, that the senior presbyter should statedly preside. But some presbyters were not qualified to teach well, though well adapted to preside, and they, therefore, who could properly discharge both duties, were to be regarded as worthy of double honor. The presbyters, who are here said 'to labor in the word,' are included under those who rule, this office being equally open to all, 'especially they,' that is, those of 'the presbyters who rule well, and are, besides, able to preach, also.' These cannot, therefore, be a distinct class, but are a part of the same order. This is manifest, since in other places the apostle demands of bishops and presbyters, between whom he makes no distinction, the qualifications requisite for the office of a teacher, (1 Tim. 3: 2, and Tit. 1: 9,) and, therefore, unless we will make the apostle contradict himself, he must have regarded all presbyters as teachers, though some were appointed to rule.[5] The practice of the churches, in subsequent times, expounds this text; for having few learned and able speakers, he that could preach best preached, ordinarily, and was made chief, or bishop, or president, while the rest assisted him in government, and other offices, and taught the people more privately; being, however, regarded as of the same office and order with him, and preaching occasionally, as necessity or use-

1) De Sanhed. cap. 4.

2) This is also urged by Lightfoot. See Wks. vol. i. pp. 611, 612.

3) Hist. of the First Plant. of Chr. vol. i. p. 177. See also Vitringa de Synag. Vet. lib. ii. c. 11. Reland Antiq. Ebr. 1: 10. Riddle's Christ'n Antiq. p. 160.

4) See good on in his Prelat. Episc. Wks. vol. i. p. 64.

5) This view of the passage, I find urged at length, by Macknight, Comm. in loco, vol. iii. pp. 206, 207. Riddle's Christ'n Antiq. p. 231. See also Neander's Hist. of the First Plant. of Christ'y, vol. i. p. 177.—

fulness required.[1] Nor is it any objection to this interpretation, that it supposes in each church a plurality of presbyters, which would in many cases be useless, and beyond the ability of the church to maintain. For while in many cases, as in that of Gregory Thaumaturgus, whose congregation numbered seventeen persons, there was only one bishop, or presbyter, yet generally a plurality did in fact exist, and were very necessary, when we consider the circumstances of the church at that time, and its relations to the infidel world around it. And as to support, we know that all the officers were provided for out of a common stock; that the weekly collections for this purpose were very liberal; that many supported themselves out of their own resources; that many followed in part some lucrative employment; that the presbyters all lived together, with their president; and that their mode of living was at first strictly economical.[2] Neither is it any valid objection to this interpretation, that, according to presbyterians, this passage refers to the two classes of presbyters — the teaching and the ruling elders, and not to the two offices or employments of the same class of officers. This view of the passage we are constrained to reject, for many reasons, which we will offer briefly in a note.[3] We do not think there is any evidence, whatever, that our ruling elders are in any case alluded to in scripture, under the term 'presbyters,' or 'elders.' These titles are, we think, in all cases, employed to denote teachers, or ministers. The same is true of the *usus loquendi* of the fathers. With them, also, the term presbyter is employed to denote the order of teacher, and not the order of ruling elder. This latter office they certainly refer to, but it is under the term *senior*, and *seinores plebis*.

The officers, now called ruling elders, are still, however, to be regarded as scriptural and proper. They are spoken of in scripture, although not under the title of presbyters.

Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 62. Riddle's Christ'n Antiq. B. iii. c. 4, § 2, pp. 231, 232, 233. See also 231. Lightfoot's Wks. vol. iii. pp. 258, 259. Mosheim's Commentaries, by Vidal, vol. i. pp. 215–218. Voetius's Politicæ Eccles. tom. iii. p. 439, &c. Neander's Hist. of the Planting of Christ. vol. i. pp. 174 and 178. Also Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. pp. 189–191, 'Presbyters, for ruling well, are worthy of double honor, specially, for laboring in the word. Here are not two sorts of elders . . . but two duties of each presbyter, namely, to teach and govern, before he can be worthy of double honor.' Bilson's Perpet. Govt. of Chr'n Ch. Ep. Ded. pp. 8, 9, and 131. Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 165.

1) Baxter, on Episc. part ii. p. 122. Apost. Fath. ed. Cotel. tom. i. p. 624.

2) See Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 29, 100–104, where this objection is fully met. That there were several teaching presbyters in the same church, appears from Cyprian, Ep. 29.

3) See Note A.

Christ, as we have seen, delegated all power to the body of the church, so that every member has an equal right to participate in its government. But, as all cannot be officers, and as all cannot meet to transact business, they must act by delegated officers, that is, by ruling elders, who are, as our standards teach, the representatives of the people. We find, therefore, that such officers sat with the apostles and presbyters, in the councils of the church, as delegated commissioners, under the title of 'the brethren.'[1] They are also probably referred to in other passages.[2]

In conclusion, that no one may think, that, in thus contending for a presidency among co-equal presbyters, we are advocating a novel theory, or one contrary to the principles of presbyterianism, we beg leave to quote the words of the divines of the synod of the province of London.[3] 'The ancient fathers,' say these divines, 'in the point of episcopacy, differ more from the high prelatist, than from the presbyterian; for the presbyterians always have a president to guide their actions, which they acknowledge may be perpetual *durante vita modo se bene gesserit;* or temporary, to avoid inconvenience, which Bilson takes hold of as advantageous, because so little discrepant (as he saith) from what he maintaineth.' Beza also, (the leader against prelacy,) says, 'It is of divine institution, that in every assembly of presbyters, there be one that go before, and be above the rest.'

## § 6. *This view of the apostolic churches confirmed by the fathers.*

It is not a little confirmatory of this view, to find these very words upon which we have been commenting, adopted by the *usus loquendi* of the early church, as the titles of the officiating and presiding teacher or pastor. Polycarp, in his letter to Valens, recognises the authority of the presbyters over him, their co-presbyter, and represents him as having been 'made a presbyter among *them*.'[4] Clemens speaks of 'the presbyters appointed over' the church at Corinth, as having the gifts, επισκοπης, or the episcopacy.[5]

Thus Justin Martyr mentions the προεστως των αδελφων, who was a presbyter, who presided, and offered up the eucharistic

1) Acts, 1:15–26; 6:1–6; and 15th.

2) e. g. 1 Cor. Rom. 8.

3) Jus. Div. Ministerii App. p. 122, part ii. Beza de Gradibus Min. Evang. in Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 347. See also Calvin's Instit.

4) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 227.

5) Ibid.

prayers. He calls him 'that one of the brethren who presides.'[1] Irenæus, in describing the succession of bishops, calls them 'presbyters, presiding among their brethren.' Such were Soter, Victor, and others, who are now glorified into popes, but who, in the days of Irenæus, were only πρεσβυτεροι οι προιστανται, presiding or ruling presbyters.[2] Clement of Alexandria, places the honor of bishops in their having the *first seat* in the presbytery, that is, among the other presbyters, πρωτοκαθεδριαι.[3] Tertullian also represents the government of the church as resident in the council of presbyters, *ecclesiastici ordinis concessus*, of which the bishop was the *antistes*, *præsidens*, or *summus sacerdos*. 'The presidents that bear rule, are,' says he, 'certain approved presbyters.'[4] Even Ignatius describes the bishop as the officer of an individual church, and as occupying the first seat προκαθημενοι. The apostolical tradition ascribed to Hippolytus, represents the bishop or moderator asking the presbytery of the church over which a pastor was to be set apart, 'whom they desire for a president?' ον αιτουνται εις αρχοντα. The setting apart of the presiding bishop, or presbyter, was, by 'the deacons holding the divine gospels over his head,' while presbyters were ordained by imposition of hands; nor is there any proof that the prelates, or presiding bishops, were separately ordained by imposition of hands, before the third century.[5]

Basil speaks of the προισταμενοι or rulers of Christ's flock.[6] Gregory, of Nyssa, calls bishops the spiritual προισταμενοι or rulers.[7] Both Theodoret and Theophylact explain the term as referring to those who preach, and administer the sacraments, and preside over spiritual affairs.[8] Chrysostom is of the same opinion.[9] Isidore, of Pelusuim, in the fifth century, uses the words προισταμενος, επισκοπος, and ιερευς, promiscuously, for the same office.[10] Augustine testifies to the same thing; 'for what is a bishop,' says he, 'but a primus presbyter, that is, a high priest, (who was in order, only a priest,) and he, (that is, the apostle,) calls them no otherwise than his co-presbyters, and co-priests.'[11] In like manner does he employ the term *sacerdos*, priest, as synonymous with *episcopus*,

1) Apol. ad Anton. Sect. I. c. 67.
2) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 227.
3) Ibid, p. 228.
4) See in archb. Usher's Reduction of Episc.
5) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 229.
6) In Ps. 28. In Suiceri Thes. in voce.
7) In ibid.
8) In ibid, and p. 194.
9) On 1 Tim. 5: 17, and Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 158.
10) See Dr. Wilson's Prim. Ch. p. 160.
11) Tom. iv. 780, in Dr. Wilson, p. 182.

bishop, occasionally prefixing the epithet *summus*, or chief, and thus regarding the bishop as no more than the *primus*, presiding or ruling presbyter.[1] Cyprian is strong in confirmation of the same position. While he employs 'the office of a priesthood,' and 'the degree of a bishop,' as synonymous,[2] his great argument, upon which he frequently dwells, for the superior honor of bishops, is founded upon the preëminence of Peter over the other apostles. But he himself teaches, and the fathers generally taught, that Peter was only *primus inter pares*, and that all the apostles were one in order, and equal in power. And, therefore, he must have believed that bishops were greater in honor than other presbyters, only because elevated to the situation of presidency.[3] He thought Peter was ordinarily præses, or moderator, in the apostolic presbytery, and that bishops stood in the same relation to their presbyters. Cyprian, in fact, was nothing more nor less than moderator of his eight presbyters, without whom he could do nothing.[4] Such was also the case with Cornelius, bishop of Rome.[5] Sozomen, the ecclesiastical historian, is also found using the terms *επισκοπος*, *προεστως*, *ηγημενος*, and *προστατης*, as convertible terms, and thus preserving the original idea of the bishop, as the presiding presbyter.[6] Hilary, under the names of Ambrose and others, calls the bishop *primus presbyter*.[7] Optatus calls him *primicerius*, which, as a learned civilian defines it, means *πρωτον της ταξεως*, the first of his order,[8] and consequently, still a presbyter. The presbyter is thus described by Gregory Nazianzen, as the second bishop, *εν δευτεροις θρονοις*. Just as the prætor Urbanus was called maximus, while yet he had no more power than the others, but only a greater dignity; and as the chief archon at Athens was only one among many, *pares protestate*, so presbyters and bishops had *idem ministerium*, as Jerome attests, and *eadem ordinatio*, as Hilary declares; that is, the same ministry, orders, ordination, and power, although the bishop had the first place in official dignity.

1) Tom. iv. 780, in Dr. Wilson, p. 182.

2) Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 395, 362, and c. 393.

3) See this position abundantly proved by Prof. Jameson, in his Cyprianus Isotimus, pp. 374, 375, 377, 380, 390, 391.

4) See Epistles, 8, 9, 20, 30, 35, 36, 48, 59, and Jameson, p. 448.

5) In Epistle 49, ibid. To this agrees the testimony of Usher, in his Reduction of Episc., who thus interpreted them. That there were many officers in the same church, see Jameson, pp. 462–464.

6) See quoted in tom. iv. in Dr. Wilson, p. 191.

7) In 1 Tim. Autor. Quest. in V. et. N. T. in Baxter's Diocesan Ch. p 112.

8) Gothofrid in Code, in ibid.

To these testimonies may be added that of the fourth council of Carthage. 'Let the bishop, when he is in the church, and sitting in the presbytery, be placed in a higher seat; but when he is in the manse, or house, let him acknowledge that he is but their colleague;'[1] that is, says Chamier, 'in the same charge and office.'[2]

It was doubtless in reference to this primitive custom of presidency, that the ancients speak of Peter as bishop of Antioch and Rome; James, of Jerusalem; Timothy, of Ephesus; Titus, of Crete; and Mark, of Alexandria: because they were much at those places, and frequently presided in the churches there. And hence, too, the doctrine of apostolical succession, which was nothing more than a list of those who presided over different churches.[3]

To our minds, this view of the subject is conclusive proof of the primitive order of the ministry, and of the gradual mode by which prelacy was introduced. Prelates were originally nothing more than the *presiding presbyters* of the churches. Hence, we have found among the ancients generally, that while in Greek they were denominated προϊστάμενοι in Latin they were called *præpositi*, (hence provost:)[4] and while in Greek they were called πρόεδροι that is, entitled to the first seat, in Latin they were called *præsides* and *præsidentes*, presidents;[5] and hence, too, in order to distinguish them from the other presbyters, who were still called bishops, they were, as Theodoret says, denominated *apostles*.[6] The original parity of the ministry, the identity of presbyters and bishops, and the derivation of prelates from this original order of presiding presbyters, or moderators, are thus found to be deeply imbedded in the whole nomenclature of the prelacy itself, in every age of the church. Nay, more than this, it has been shown by Filesacus, a learned papist, that presbyters were anciently denominated *hierarchici* and *prelates*, the very highest terms by which a superiority of order is held forth.[7] And hence a bishop has been called '*presbyter cum additamento superioritatis quoad regimen ecclesiæ*,' a presbyter with an addition of superiority, with regard to the government of the church, with which his appointment to the presidency of the church clothes him.[8]

1) Caranz. Summ. Concil. Can. § 5. In Jameson's Cyp. p. 441.

2) Tom. ii. lib. xiv. c. 14, N. 12, in ibid, p. 442.

3) Benson's Essay on the Relig. Worship of the Christians, ch. vii. § 6.

4) See authorities in Riddle's Ch. Antiq. p. 161. Coleman's ibid, p. 98. Bingham, vol. i. p. 53, &c.

5) Riddle's Ant. p. 162. Bing'm. &c.

6) Riddle, ibid, p. 162.

7) See quoted in Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 115.

8) Goode's Divine Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. p. 89, Eng. ed.

## § 7. *This view of the apostolic churches confirmed by prelatists themselves.*

It is universally conceded by all antiquity, that all things in the ancient church were ordered and transacted by the general consent of presbyters. This position is established at great length by Mr. Thorndike,[1] and by bishop Stillingfleet, who says, 'there was still one ecclesiastical senate which ruled all the several congregations of the cities in common, of which the several presbyters of the congregations were members, and in which the bishop acted as president of the senate.[2] Archbishop Usher testifies to the same thing; 'of the many presbyters,' says he, 'who in common thus ruled the church of Ephesus, there was one president, whom our Saviour in his epistle unto this church, in a peculiar manner, styleth the angel of the church.'[3] 'I maintain,' says Saravia, certainly one of the most learned and judicious of the defenders of prelacy, 'that there is one order of all bishops; only there is an inequality of provinces, and a diversity of degrees.'[4]

'The Institution of a Christian Man,' which was approved by the king, and twenty-one archbishops and bishops, in 1537, most fully warrants our conclusion, that the power of jurisdiction belongs, 'BY GOD'S LAW,' to presbyters. In treating of 'the sacrament of orders,' it holds this language. 'Forasmuch as after the mind of certain doctors of the church, this whole power and authority belonging unto priests (presbyters) and bishops, (presbyters are named first, as being the generic order,) is divided into two parts, whereof the one is called *protestas ordinis*, and the other is called *protestas jurisdictionis:* and forasmuch, also, as good consent and agreement hath alway been in the church, concerning the said first part, and contrary, much controversy for this other part of jurisdiction; we think it convenient, that all bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach the people committed unto their charge, that the jurisdiction COMMITTED UNTO PRIESTS (presbyters) and bishops, BY THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S LAW, (and not, therefore, by any ecclesiastical license or custom,) consisteth in three special points. The first is, to rebuke and reprehend sin, and to excommunicate

1) Prim. Govt. of the Ch.
2) Iren. pp. 354–356.
3) Reduction of Episc.
4) Defens. p. 286, in Baxter on Episc. p. 47.

the manifest and obstinate sinners, &c.[1] The second point wherein consisteth the jurisdiction committed unto priests and bishops, by the authority of God's law, is, to approve and admit such persons, as being nominated, elected, and presented unto them, to execute the office and room of preaching the gospel, and of ministering the sacraments, and to have the care of jurisdiction over these certain people, within this parish, or within this diocese, who shall be thought unto them meet and worthy to exercise the same: and to reject and repel from the said room, such as they shall judge to be unmeet therefor,[2] &c. The third point is, to make and ordain certain rules or canons, concerning holy days, fasting days, the manner and ceremonies to be used in the ministration of the sacraments, THE DIVERSITY OF DEGREES AMONG THE MINISTRY,' &c.[3] Thus manifest is it, that the church of England, in her first reformation, did authoritatively set forth the great presbyterian principle, that, by authority of God's word, there is but one order of ministers,[4] called indifferently presbyters and bishops, and that to these presbyters was committed the whole power of the church, both as it regards ordination and jurisdiction. This latter power was also continued in the English church, in the common usage of the ecclesiastical courts, in which a presbyter is appointed to denounce the sentence of excommunication, though the chancellor decrees it. Nor is this excommunication complete, till a presbyter has denounced it in the congregation. In the form of their ordination also, until the year 1662, this power was formally committed to presbyters.[5]

### § 8. *This view of the apostolic churches explains all the difficulties thrown in our way by prelatists.*

We have dwelt at such length upon this position, because we regard it as of primary importance in this controversy. This view of the primitive order of the church, will at once account for all subsequent changes; meet all the difficulties of the case; and resolve all the problems which are proposed. Thus, when prelatists draw out their lists and catalogues of successive bishops, in the several apostolic churches, we find them at once, so far as they are credible, in these presidents, who

1) See this point fully dwelt on, at p. 108.

2) See this point fully dwelt on, at pp. 109, 110.

3) Ibid, at pp. 110, 111–123.

4) Christ did institute, 'besides the civil powers, certain other ministers, or officers, who should have certain power,' &c., enumerating every ministerial function, p. 101.

5) See Corbet on the Church, pp. 45, 46.

would naturally constitute the individual representatives of their brethren and contemporaries. In later times, when there were several congregations in the same presbytery, the president was made pastor of the *ecclesia principalis*, the αυθεντικη καθεδρα, which was ιδιως θρονος his peculiar throne,[1] and thus would he in every way shine forth among the other stars, as the most eminent and brilliant.[2] But, even then, these presidents were eminent only as the first in rank among their colleagues in the same *order and office*, just as were archdeacons among the deacons, archpresbyters among the presbyters, archbishops among the bishops, and patriarchs among the archbishops. Thus, also, among the *archontes* at Athens, while all were equal in power, yet was one called *archon*, by way of eminence. His name alone was inserted in the public records of that year, which was reckoned from him. And so also, was it among the five *ephori* at Sparta, of whom, in like manner, one was chosen as president, and actually denominated προεστως, as Plutarch informs us. So that a succession of single persons named above the rest in the apostolic churches, would never prove that they were any other than what we have described — the προεστωτες or presidents of the churches,[3] especially, as this title is given to presbyters as well as bishops, even by Cyprian himself.[4]

Again, when prelatists taunt us with the evident existence of diocesan prelacy at an early period, we find its origin in the corruption and abuse of this apostolic presbyterianism, or parochial episcopacy.[5] 'For,' says the learned Whitaker, the darling of the church of England, 'as at the first one presbyter was set over the rest of the presbyters and made a bishop; so afterwards one bishop was set over the rest of the bishops. And thus that custom hatched the pope with his monarchy, and by degrees brought him into the church.'[6] 'It was the judgment of her founders, (that is, of the church of England,) PERHAPS UNANIMOUSLY, but at all events generally, that the bishop of the primitive church was merely a presiding elder; a presbyter ruling over presbyters; identical in order and commission; superior only in degree and authority.'[7]

1) Baxter, as above, pp. 108, 109, and auth. there.

2) See Henderson's Rev. and Consid. p. 336, &c.

3) See Stillingfleet, Iren. p. 301.

4) See Ep. 15 and 21, and Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 270, 271.

5) Mr. Goode, in his Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 62, 63, and 65, offers no other proof for prelacy than this admitted presidency among the presbyters, and thus begs the whole question. He is ignorant enough, also, to adduce Calvin, Grotius, Bucer, and others, as favoring prelacy, because they approved of this episcopacy, pp. 66, 67, and 68.

6) Quæst. De Pontif. Rom. i. cap. 3, § 29, in Jameson, Cyp. Isot. p. 281.

7) Essays on the Church, p. 251, by an Episcopalian.

§ 9. *Proofs from the fathers, that presbyters possess the power of discipline and excommunication, the highest acts of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the power generally.*

As it regards the power of discipline, and of excommunication, Theodoret describes προστασια, jurisdiction, as belonging to every presbyter, 'he having the government of the church; and in the exercise of it often grieving delinquents, they being ill-affected to him, will be apt to bring false accusations.'[1] Jerome, though a presbyter, distinctly claims the power of excommunication.[2] He asserts that it belongs to presbyters to deliver the offender to Satan by excommunication.[3] Chrysostom, while a presbyter, threatened some of his auditory with excommunication.[4] Justinian, as late as the sixth age, plainly teaches, in his constitutions, that presbyters might excommunicate.[5] Hilary, the deacon, on Eph. 4: 2, says, that presbyters ordain, (consignant,) or, as Mr. Palmer would translate it, confirm in the bishop's absence, 'for both are priests.' And this privilege still remains a part of the power of presbyters, throughout the eastern churches.[6] Tertullian says, 'the presbyters have the charge of excommunication and censures.'[7] He also teaches, that 'the presidents who bear rule are certain approved elders, (presbyters,) who have obtained this honor not by reward but by good report;' who were no other, according to archbishop Usher, than those from whose hands they used to receive the sacrament of the eucharist.'[8] As it regards this power, generally, we know that presbyters alone have governed the church of Rome for years together, when it had no bishop:[9] that presbyters sat regularly in the provincial, and in many cases in the general councils, also: and that they did not sit always in the latter, because, as Dr. Field says, it was necessary to limit the number of members.[10] Hence, presbyters are still mem-

1) On Tim. 5: 19.

2) Ad. Heliodorum. Mihi ante presbyterum sedere non licet, illi si peccavero licet me tradere Satanæ ad interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus sit.

3) Licet presbytero si peccavero Satanæ me tradere. See in Boyse's Episc. p. 216.

4) Hom. 17, in Matt.

5) Novel. 123, c. 11. and sex. 39, § 2, in Baxter's Diocesan Ch. p. 112.

6) Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 420.

7) In Rutherford's Plea, p. 17.

8) Reduction of Episc. in Jameson's Cyp. p. 450.

9) See instances in Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 107; and Blondel, § 3, pp. 183, 184.

10) See examples, in Baxter on Episc. part ii. pp. 110, 113, 115; and Blondel, § 3, pp. 202–207; and Dr. Field on the Ch. lib. v. ch. xxvii. and xlix.

bers of the convocation, with full power to vote and deliberate, and are in many other ways recognised as inherently possessing this power of jurisdiction.[1] Polycarp exhorts the Philippians, 'to submit themselves to the presbyters and deacons, as to Christ.' Irenæus, his disciple, admonishes the faithful of the same duty.[2] Tertullian we have already examined. Ignatius commits the government of the church to 'a senate of pastors or presbyters,' 'who,' as Usher declares, 'then had a hand, not only in the delivery of the doctrine and sacraments, but also in the administration of the discipline of Christ.'[3] Origen and Ruffinus compare the presbytery to the senate of a city; Cyprian and Firmilianus ascribe to them, and the other officers, the power of the keys.[4] So also, according to Socrates, says the Nicene Council.[5] Clemens Alexandrinus places discipline in the hands of the presbyters.[6] Augustine and Gregory, both give the power of censures to presbyters.[7] Quotations to the same effect from Dionysius Alexandrinus, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Eusebius, Zonaras, Theodoret, and Nazianzen, may be seen in Rutherford,[8] who also proves that this was the doctrine of the Waldenses, and of the reformers.[9]

Before leaving the subject, however, we would adduce one example of the practical exercise of this power by presbyters, as late as the third age, and as it is recorded by Epiphanius, one of the most arrogant of the prelatic fathers. It will, from this history, be made clear, that, even then, bishops had no other power than that derived from his office of moderator. 'After him,' says he, namely, Bardesanes, 'another heretic, Noetus, appeared, not many years hence, but about 130, an Ephesian by birth, who, being inspired by a strange spirit, adventured to affirm and teach such things, which neither the prophets, nor the apostles, nor the kirk from the beginning held, nor ever thought of. Wherefore, being puffed up by a

1) See enumerated in Baxter, as above, p. 111.

2) Lib. iv. c. 43, and cap. 44. See quoted in Rutherford's Plea, p. 17.

3) Reduction of Episcop. in Jameson, p. 449. See fully quoted in Rutherford, as above.

4) See Ep. 14, 33, 10, 68.

5) In Rutherford, ibid.

6) Alex. Stromat. lib. vii. quoted in Rutherford.

7) Contra Crescon, l. iii. c. 5, 6, and Epist. 136. Greg. l. ii. Ep. 16.

8) Plea, p. 18.

9) Ibid, p. 19.

See also quotations from Cyprian, Firmilian, Gregory, Naz., Chrysostom, Augustine, Isidore, Salvianus, Gildas, &c. In Causa Episcopat. Hierarch. Lucifuga, Edinb. 1706, p. 25, &c. See also numerous proofs to the same effect, in Baxter on Episc. ch. xiii. part ii. p. 104, &c., and ch. xiv. where he quotes from many of the greatest prelatists. See also numerous proofs given in Smectymnuus, pp. 38–40, § 9.

kind of madness, he confidently affirmed, that God, the Father, suffered; but being yet puffed up by greater pride and madness, he called himself Moses, and his brother, Aaron. In the mean time οἱ μακαριοι πρεσβυτεροι, &c. The blessed presbyters (or pastors) of the kirk, being moved by the report of this matter, summoned Noetus before them, and interrogated him concerning all these matters: if he had broached such blasphemy against God, the Father. But he began first to deny επι των πρεσβυτεριων ἀρξαμενος, when he was brought before the presbytery, that poisonous doctrine which nobody before him had adventured to spew out. After that, when he had infected some with his madness, and had gathered to himself about ten persons, turning more insolent, he openly spread his heresy. Therefore, again, ου αυτοι πρεσβυτεροι the same very presbyters summoned, not only him, but the rest, who had unhappily joined with him, and to interrogate him concerning the very same thing. But he, with his accomplices, growing impudent, began boldly to contradict (the presbytery). And, saith he, what ill have I done? I adore one God: one I know, neither that was born, suffered or died. To which opinion, when he adhered, they (the presbyters) excommunicated him and his followers. At length he died a little after, with his brother; neither was he buried with the like honor as Moses of old, or with the same as Aaron. For they were rejected as transgressors, neither were they buried by any catholic. Afterwards, they who had imbibed his doctrine strengthened this opinion, being induced with the same words with which their master was at the beginning. For he told them, when he was interrogated απο των πρεσβυτεριων by the presbyters, that he worshipped one God,'[1] &c.

1) See in Blondel, and in Jameson's Sum. of the Episc. Controv. p. 156, &c.

# CHAPTER VII.

## PRESBYTERS ARE, BY DIVINE RIGHT, CLOTHED WITH THE POWER OF ORDINATION.

### § 1. *The power of presbyters to ordain formerly acknowledged by the Anglican and Roman churches.*

Prelatists claim certain powers and prerogatives as peculiarly the right and function of their prelates. By the exercise of these powers, they say, they are distinguished, and constituted the first and highest order of the christian ministry. If, therefore, it can be shown that these same powers were, by divine right, vested in presbyters, it will of course follow, that presbyters were, originally, the highest order of the ministry, and that, as Jerome says, custom, by degrees, brought in the office of prelate to rule and tyrannize over the church. We have, therefore, endeavored to make it plain, that the powers of preaching, of conducting public worship, of administering baptism and the Lord's supper, and of jurisdiction, five of these prelatic functions, did originally belong to presbyters, and were, beyond doubt, exercised by them.

There remains to be considered, the sixth prelatic function, the power, namely, of ordination, which is considered essential to complement and fill up the plenitude of episcopal authority. We proceed therefore, to show, that this also was originally inherent in the office of the presbyter. And were prelatists to remain always in the same mind, or to allow their own proceedings to be interpreted by common sense, our argument need be neither long nor difficult. For 'The Institution of a Christian Man,' already quoted, and which authoritatively expressed the sentiments of the English church after the reformation, not only ascribes this power, as we have seen, to all ministers who are called by it presbyters and bishops, but boldly declares, that this right had never been

denied them. 'Forasmuch,' says this work, 'as the whole power and authority of the church, belonging unto priests and bishops, is divided into two parts, whereof the one is called *potestas ordinis*, and the other is called *potestas jurisdictionis;* and forasmuch, also, as good consent and agreement hath alway been in the church concerning the first part, and contrary, much controversy for this other part of jurisdiction.'[1] Such was the judgment of the English reformed church, in 1537. And that this continued to be her views, until 1662, is beyond controversy, since, up to that time, she had only one form of ordination, and in it conveyed to presbyters all and every power, given to those who were called bishops.[2] The same fact is still proclaimed in her canonical practice, which requires, in ordination, the presence and concurrence of presbyters — a standing monument to the truth of their original rights. The same thing is infallibly taught in the Romish church, which has, in numerous cases, authorized the consecration, even of bishops, by the concurrent imposition of the hands, of one or two presbyters out of the three ordainers required by the canons: and in which church it is the prevailing doctrine, that the presbyterate is the generic order, and the fountain of all ministerial power.

It is in vain to allege, that this imposition of the hands of the presbyters, with that of the bishop, is merely for attestation, and not for concurrence. For why, were this true, should the privilege be confined to presbyters, and not be extended to deacons also, seeing, that they, as well as presbyters, are regarded as ministers by these prelatists? And why, if this is the only reason for this practice, should not both presbyters and deacons be permitted to express their assent and approbation at the ordination of prelates as well as of presbyters? It is plain, that the custom originated in the acknowledged and inherent power of presbyters to ordain presbyters; whereas, prelates being, by ecclesiastical law, elevated to a new and higher office, presbyters were not allowed to assist in their consecration. This reason the council of Carthage expressly assigns, when it decrees, that, while in the ordination of a presbyter, presbyters shall assist and impose their hands; in the ordination of a deacon only the prelate shall ordain, 'because he is consecrated, not to the *priesthood*, but to the ministry,' or deaconship.[3]

1) Form. of Faith. in Reign of Henry VIII, p. 107. See also The Necess. Doctr. pp. 280, 282, which is very strong.

2) Lect. on the Apost. Succ.

3) See in Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 109, c. Concil. Carth. Can. 2, &c.

As, however, this right of presbyters is now universally denied by prelatists, we will enter at some length upon the substantiation of the claim of presbyters to this function also.

### § 2. *The nature of ordination explained.*

The functions already considered are essential to the due organization of the church, and to its right government when constituted; the power of ordination is equally necessary to its perpetuation. For as there must always be ministers to guide, teach, and govern the church; and as the office of the ministry is one which no man can lawfully take upon himself without being called thereto: so must there be some body, or council, authorized to invest worthy and qualified men with the ministerial office. The essence of a call to the work of the ministry, consists in a willingness of mind, on the part of any qualified individual, to obey that command of Christ, by which ministers are authorized to go forth and preach the gospel. That command is the only efficient cause of the ministry, — the only warrant of its divine authority, — and the only security for its success. Christ alone could and did institute this office; and He alone can impart that spiritual power necessary to it.

And this He does in the standing and fundamental law or charter of his church. He, therefore, who gives evidence, sufficient and satisfactory, that he has been thus called of God, is to be set apart or consecrated to the office of the christian ministry by ordination. Ordination may be defined to be an outward and solemn rite, by which an individual, who has given evidence of being divinely called, is, by the lawful authority of some particular church, invested with the office of the ministry, and thus, ecclesiastically, clothed with the name, character, and authority of a christian minister. Ordination, therefore, is a solemn inauguration into office, or investiture with authority, by virtue of God's ordinance, and as a ratification of His divine act, in having inwardly called and qualified the individual, thus separated, to his own instituted work. While, therefore, ordination is necessary, as the ordinary and orderly introduction to the ministry; it is not so absolutely necessary as that there can, in no case, be a lawful and valid ministry, without it; for as the essence of the ministry consists in the plain manifestation of Christ's will, that any individual should act under the authority and promise of his commission; so

may there be cases when this will be sufficiently evident, although ordination, by man, may not be procurable.[1]

The writers of the New Testament use five different words in speaking of ordination,[2] all of which are general, and can be made to mean no more than *to appoint or place in office*. For the hierachical notion, that ordination impresses a character, imparts a fitness for the office not previously possessed, communicates the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and constitutes the most vile and abandoned men, the most worthy, and valid, and approved ministers — for all this, there is not a shadow of support in reason, in the word of God, or in actual fact. These suppositions, on the contrary, we believe to be unscriptural, anti-christian, and pernicious in the extreme, and to be equally derogatory to the divine Head, and the divine Agent, of the church.[3]

So much for ordination, in its general character, as a solemn separation of persons to a sacred office. But this act of consecration must be performed in some particular manner or form. The mode in which this was done, is recorded in five places in the New Testament, namely, in Acts. 6: 6. Acts, 13: 3. 1 Tim. 4: 14, compared with 2 Tim. 1: 6, and 1 Tim. 5: 22. In all these cases, we find this act of solemn consecration was symbolized by the laying on of hands upon the head of the individuals ordained. This form, or ceremonial, had been long in use among the Jews, when a benediction was pronounced, when pardon was proclaimed, when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were bestowed, when miraculous cures were performed, and when persons were inducted into office. This last use of the ceremony was very common in the Jewish synagogue, and familiar to the Jews.[4] In the case of the deacons, the Holy Spirit had been already imparted, and their call made certain, before they received imposition of hands.[5] The apostles, therefore, did not lay on hands upon them to bestow that gift or that call, but simply to invest them with that office, for which they had been divinely qualified, and to which they had been called by the voice of the people. In the case of Barnabas and Saul, as related in Acts, 13: 1–3, imposition of hands, most assuredly, did not communicate any character or gifts, but was merely a public designation to the office of the ministry, after the customary form. Timothy, in like manner, is said to have

1) Mark, 3: 14; Acts, 1: 22; Acts, 14: 23; 1 Tim. 2: 7; Titus, 1: 5. See the subject fully examined by Dr. Rice, in Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 541, &c.

2) See Lect. on Apost. Succ.

3) See Corbet's Remains, p. 66.

4) Numb. 27: 15—23, &c.

5) See Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 543, and Acts, 6.

been set apart, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, to an office, to which he had been previously called by the voice of prophecy.[1] It thus appears, that while laying on of hands was used by the apostles, in the communication of miraculous gifts, and in the public recognition of official authority and office, it is never employed, by the New Testament writers, to signify the bestowment of the ordinary sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit. No such meaning or interpretation is sanctioned by the word of God, and is, therefore, superstitious. And since no modern prelates will undertake to confer, by this rite, miraculous gifts, the form can in no case mean more than a recognition of authority.[2] In conveying ordination, the ordainers have no original or personal authority whatever, but only a ministerial authority, of investing with office, those who give evidence of their qualifications, according to the charter of Christ. This is the true source of all original ministerial authority. True ministers of Christ, are not called or commissioned by man, but by Him. They derive their authority, not from man, but from His charter. They are not man-made ministers, as they would be on this prelatical theory. Men only admit them into the exercise of that office, to which Christ has commissioned them, just as civil officers are, by some appointed form admitted to those offices, whose authority and functions depend altogether upon the law and charter. According to scripture, therefore, ordination by the imposition of hands, is nothing more than induction into that sacred office, established by Jesus Christ, and a solemn offering of the person ordained, to the service and glory of God, and to his merciful assistance and blessing.[3] It is a declaration, that the individual receiving it, is qualified for the office of the ministry, has consented to undertake it, and is thus recognised as possessing the authority conveyed by the charter of Christ. And this investiture is made by imposition of hands, because the hand is identified with and distinctive of man, and is, by the most ancient belief, connected with authority and power. Ordination, therefore, by imposition of hands, we believe to be important and necessary, not as the medium of any communicated character, official authority, or actual grace, but because it is the will of Christ, who has appointed it, that in his church, every thing should be done decently, and in or-

1) See Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 545.
2) See this fully shown in Daillé Treatise of the Sacramt. of Confirmn. See also Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 220.
3) See Calvin, Instit. B. iv. ch. iii. § 16.

der; because it secures that the teachers of religion shall be as well qualified as possible, for discharging the duties of their office; because it gives confidence to the people, that those who come to them as ministers of religion, are sound and capable teachers of the truth:[1] because the dignity of the ministry is, in this way, publicly recommended to the people, and its authority enforced; and because ministers are thus admonished, that they are no longer their own masters, but devoted to the service of God and the church. And this particular form, alone, is to be observed, because this was the only form adopted by Christ and his apostles, and is therefore urged upon us, as forcibly as it would be by a positive precept.[2] And although we would not affirm, that imposition of hands is necessary to the *validity* of any ministry, so that without it Christ will not authenticate its acts, and make it successful and efficient; we must believe that it is essential to the *regularity* of any ministry, that is, its conformity to scripture rule, and the established laws of the church; and that it ought not, therefore, to be omitted. Even when called, qualified, and authorized to engage in the ministry, a man must not enter upon the actual exercise of it without this solemn recognition of his call by the church. This is the outward sign and seal of his office in the church. It presupposes his fitness and call before God, and yet is necesary, just as is baptism, in order to give him introduction and admission to the church. By this, the church is authorized to regard and treat him as a duly called and qualified minister, and to give him the respect and obedience due to his sacred office. Wherever, therefore, such ministerial investiture and ordination can be obtained, the order of Christ's house requires every one, who is called by his Spirit, to seek it at the hands of those who have authority in the church to bestow it.

Seeing, however, that we admit the importance and necessity of ordination by imposition of hands, for the sake of order, and for the security of the truth, the question recurs to whom it appertains, on behalf of the church, and in Christ's name, thus solemnly to induct into the office of the ministry. And that this right or duty belongs to presbyters, we will now endeavor to prove.

1) Dr. Rice, ibid, p. 545.

2) Calvin, as above. See also Jus. Div. Min. p. 173, part ii. Cranmer denied the necessity of ordination at all. See in Presb. Def. p. 50. McCrie's Knox, vol. i. p. 401.

§ 3. *A general argument, in favor of ordination by presbyters.*

Before proceeding to any formal proof, that presbyters can ordain, there is one general argument to which we would advert. The commission, as we have seen, necessarily includes the power of ordination. But this applies to presbyters, and is the basis of their ministerial authority and existence. Moreover, this commission is one, so that to whomsoever it applies, it gives all the powers and rights vested by it. Being also divine, it is beyond the control of man, and cannot be altered or divided. The power and office of the ministry are immediately from Christ, and not from the church. The church can only designate the persons to whom that power and office shall be given, and ministerially deliver to them possession, by the investing right of ordination. Every minister, therefore, must possess the power of ordination, as well as of jurisdiction; and this power, coming directly from Christ, no authority of man can deprive any of Christ's ministers of this or any other part of the authority given by Him. And since presbyters are confessedly ministers of Christ, and instituted by this commission, this power must be theirs.

'*Ordinis est ordinare*,' says archbishop Usher, 'and what any one has received, that he can also give,' says Jerome,[1] that is, he that hath the order, hath intrinsically the power, to ordain. 'Taking things in themselves,' says bishop Burnet, 'it will follow, that whatever power one hath, he may transmit to others, and therefore, there seems to be small reason, why one who hath the power of preaching the gospel, and administering sacraments, may not also transmit the same to others.'[2] Maimonides saith every one, regularly ordained, hath power to ordain his disciples also.[3] Now prelatists will *generally* admit, that presbyters do not differ from prelates in order, but only in dignity and degree. To their order, therefore, must inherently belong the power of ordination, however ecclesiastical usage may have limited it to the prelates. For as Spalatensis says: 'seeing the apostles gave the keys equally to all, bishops and presbyters — and it is a most certain thing, that the power of order is *plena*, *tota*, *integra*, fully, totally, and entirely, in every bishop and lawful presbyter — no man can, by divine right, reserve part of the keys to himself alone, and leave another part to others.[4] To create a

1) Hieron. adv. Lucif. § 9, tom. ii. col. 182, ed. Vale. Venet.
2) Obs. on 2d Canon, p. 55.
3) Ibid.
4) De Rep. Eccl. § 28, p. 474, and § 4, p. 465, in Baxter, Episc. pp. 76, 77.

new order, and to transfer to it the government and the power of ordination, is to exceed the claim of infallibility, and to legislate in the place of God.[1]

We would further premise, that our inquiry is not into that degree of power, in ordination and in government, which belonged to the apostles and evangelists, as extraordinary officers, and endowed with supernatural gifts. By their gifts they were personally distinguished, as the first and original founders of the church. In these gifts they could not be succeeded, since all such gifts have long since ceased. The power, therefore, consequent upon them, must have also terminated with their existence. And any superiority in ordination, arising from such gifts, would not affect the question, as to the ordinary and permanent ministers of the church. The apostles could do what the evangelists could not do, who were subject to them; and the evangelists, what ordinary ministers could not do. But as, apart from these gifts, the apostles were presbyters,[2] the question is, to whom, as ordinary ministers in the church, the power of ordination was committed, and by whom it was to be exercised. For, as the apostles were not a distinct order from evangelists, because superior in power and gifts: neither did these gifts, and the consequent superiority of power, make either of them a distinct order from presbyters, but only a distinct and distinguished class of presbyters, fitted for an honorable and eminent work. The question therefore is, had presbyters the power of ordination, and not whether they had equal power with the apostles and evangelists.

### § 4. *The ordination of Barnabas and Saul was conferred by presbyters.*

Our first proof, from scripture facts, is taken from what is recorded in the book of Acts, ch. 13: 1–3. 'Now there were in the church, that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas and Simeon, that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me, Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.' Now what are we to

1) Dr. Wilson, on Prim. Govt., p. 222.

2) Ch. i.

understand by this history? We affirm, that we have here an account of an ordination, that the ordination was performed by presbyters, and that presbyterian ordination is thus sanctioned by express scripture authority. And first, we are to prove that we have here a recorded instance of ordination. What, we again ask, is ordination? It is a public act by which any individual, who has been lawfully called and found qualified, is initiated into the ministry, and by this external commission receives authority to preach, to rule, and to administer ordinances in the church. What, then, is essential to ordination? It has been shown from scripture, the councils, the ancient ordinals, the doctrine of the reformation, and the testimony of learned men, that the imposition of hands, and of prayer, are the only essential rites of ordination.[1] By these rites, they who have been internally moved by the Holy Ghost, are externally called and sent into the ministry through that ecclesiastical authority established in the church. To these ceremonies some have added fasting, recommending, that, previous to the day of ordination, a fast day should be observed in the congregation.[2] It has also been held, that, in order to a *regular* ordination, there should be present at least three ministers. Now each of these marks of ordination are here enumerated. Paul and Barnabas had previously been moved by the Holy Ghost, and called into the ministry, but were now publicly separated or set apart to it, by the authority of certain ministers in the church of Antioch, which, next to Jerusalem, was then the most prominent and influential church. These ministers were thus led to set apart Barnabas and Saul, by the express teaching of the Holy Ghost. And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands upon them, and sent them away, having thus authoritatively introduced them, as ministers of Jesus Christ, to the confidence of the churches. There is, therefore, in this transaction, all the elements which constitute ordination. There can be no other interpretation put upon the whole transaction. And hence we must conclude, that we have here a case of regular ordination; and that Saul and Barnabas, who had before received an extraordinary call to the ministry, (Gal. 1: 1,) now entered upon their work, by the appointed door of ordination. Their divine call was in this way declared, attested, and ratified to the churches.

1) Palmer on the Church, vol. ii. p. 440, Eng. ed., and vol. i. part i. ch. viii. Courayer on English Ordinations.

2) Second Book of Discipline, chap. iii. § 6. Form of Govt. of Presb. Church, chap. xv. § 11.

This conclusion is sanctioned by the interpretation put upon this passage in different ages of the church, and by many of the most able and learned prelatists. Chrysostom asserts, that 'Paul was ordained at Antioch.'[1] Such also was the opinion of Theophylact and Œcumenius.[2]

Mr. Palmer, in his treatise on the church, assumes, as incontrovertible, that this was a case of ordination.[3] The same opinion is strongly expressed by archbishop Whateley,[4] and fully insisted on by archbishop Wake;[5] by archbishop Potter;[6] by bishop Jeremy Taylor;[7] by bishop Beveridge;[8] by Dr. Hammond;[9] by Scott, in his Christian Life;[10] by Skellon;[11] by Burkitt;[12] by Dr. Brett;[13] by Rev. E. Kelsale;[14] by Dr. Willet;[15] by Mr. Thorndike;[16] by Lord Barrington;[17] by Hooker;[18] by Hales;[19] by Lightfoot;[20] by Mr. Ollyffe;[21] by Dr. Pusey;[22] by Mr. Hinds;[23] by Dr. Bloomfield;[24] by Biscoe;[25] by Brewster;[26] by Dr. Hawkins;[27] by Mr. Goode;[28] by bishop Burnet, who makes it as much, and as distinct, an ordination as any consecration of prelates to their office;[29] by Mr. Hamilton;[30] by Grotius;[31] by Clarius;[32] by Diodati;[33] and by Neander.[34] But what must set the

1) See Homily, in Acts, 28, vol. ix. p. 241.

2) Cited by Chamier. See Div. Rite of the Gospel Min. part i. p. 148.

3) On the Church, vol. ii. p. 413, part vi. c. 4.

4) Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 15, p. 106.

5) Apost. Fathers. Prel. Disc. to Ep. of Barnabas, § 5, p. 271, Eng. 8vo. edition.

6) On Ch. Govt. p. 101. Am. ed 206, 263.

7) Episc. asserted in Wks. vol. vii. pp. 20, 15, and 82.

8) Wks. vol. ii. pp. 92 and 117.

9) On the N. T. in loco.

10) Wks. vol. iii. p. 118, Oxf. ed.

11) Wks. vol. vi. p. 88, and vol. iii. Disc. 73.

12) On the N. T. in loco.

13) In Waterland's Wks. vol. x. p. 179.

14) In Waterland's Wks. vol. x. pp. 20–22, where he meets objections.

15) Synop. Papismi, p. 270.

16) Prim. Govt. of the Ch. c. 5. p. 48.

17) Theol. Wks. vol. ii. pp. 32, 181, 194, 199, 200, 211, 213, 224, 229, 245, 253, 255, 256.

18) Eccl. Pol. b. vii. § 4, p. 337.

19) Analysis of Chronology, vol. iii. p. 456.

20) Wks. vol. iii. p. 210, and vol. viii, p. 508–510.

21) In Welles's Vind. of Presb. Ord. p. 49.

22) The Church, the Converter of the Heath. Serm. II. p. 5. Oxf. 1839.

23) Hist. of the Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. ii. p. 35.

24) Cut. Digest, vol. iv. pp. 407, 408.

25) The History of the Acts, &c. Oxf. 1829. p. 28.

26) Lectures on the Acts. Lond. 1807. vol. i. pp. 354, 355, &c.

27) On the Apost. Succession, 1842. p. 12.

28) On the Div. Rule of Faith. vol. ii. pp. 88, 89, Eng. ed.

29) Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. Conf. 4, p. 181.

30) Missions, their Authority, Scope, and Encouragement. London, 1842. pp. 151, 145. Mr. H. is an eminent Congregationalist, and thus gives up the point of presbyterian ordination.

31) Comm. in loco, and Acts, 6:2.

32) In Crit. Sacr. tom. vii. p. 239.

33) Annot. in loco.

34) Neander's Hist. of Plant. of Christ. vol. i. p. 122.

matter at rest in the judgment of all admirers of the English church in her palmiest days is, that, in the ordinal for the consecration of bishops, this very case is quoted as one of the two examples of ordination adduced as precedents from scriptures, in these words, 'it is written also in the Acts of the Apostles, that the disciples which were at Antioch did fast and pray, or ever they laid hands upon, or sent forth Paul and Barnabas.'[1] We are thus particular in establishing the *fact* of this ordination, because the admission of the fact leads necessarily to our conclusion, and has therefore been most stoutly resisted by recent prelatical advocates, though with glaring inconsistency and contradiction to all authority and common sense.[2]

But it is said, that the apostle Paul was already in the ministry, and could not, therefore, be now ordained, or, if ordained at all, that he was reordained as a prelate.[3] That Saul was long before this event converted, and *called by Christ* into the ministry, no one denies. But, to use the words of Dr. Pusey, 'St. Paul, though expressly called by our Lord from heaven, . . . *still went not forth to his mission* until THEY, whom the Holy Ghost appointed, had separated him and Barnabas for the work,' &c., AND THIS WAS THEIR FIRST COMMISSION, for he and Barnabas afterwards fulfilled their apostolic office by their own apostolic authority.'[4]

Lord Barrington has endeavored, and we think conclusively, to show, that it was at his second visit to Jerusalem, in A. D. 43, Saul was first commissioned as an apostle. Up to that time he had labored exclusively among the Jews and the proselytes of the gate, but had not ventured to preach the gospel to the heathen.[5] Even on the visit referred to, Paul was not received or generally recognised by the church at Jerusalem. The brethren still regarded him with suspicion and distrust,[6] and he was, therefore, directed to make haste and get him quickly out of Jerusalem, for that Christ would send him

1) The Two Liturgies of Edward VI, Compared, p. 418. Oxf. 1838.

2) Bishop Onderdonk's Episc. Tested by Script. in Wks. on Episc. pp. 424, 425. Dr. Chapman, in his Sermons to Presbyterians, ridicules the very idea that this refers to ordination, and is ready to burst with rage at the 'matchless effrontery' of the 'schismatics.' See pp. 230, 231. 'When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.'

3) Bishop Onderdonk also asserts the same thing, as it regarded Barnabas, from Acts, 11 : 23, 26, but this passage would imply the reverse, only speaking of exhorting, which is a christian duty. But even were it so, it alters not the case.

4) The Church, the Converter of the Heathen. Serm II. p. 5. Oxf. 1839.

5) It was only, however, during a part of the time he thus preached, for he spent a considerable portion of it in retirement and study. See Macknight's Life of Paul, appended to his Epistles.

6) Acts, 22 : 21.

far hence to the Gentiles. He and Barnabas departed, accordingly, to Antioch, and there labored for a whole year together, among its idolatrous inhabitants.( Acts, 11.) And it was while here, that the Holy Ghost revealed to the prophets of that church the apostleship of Saul, and the purposed mission of him and Barnabas. Up to this time the apostle was called Saul, and then only was he denominated Paul, (Acts, 13: 9.) Neither is he ever called an apostle till after this event, (Acts, 14: 4, 14.) On the contrary, in the record of this event, he is expressly denominated 'a prophet and a teacher.' He is enumerated as one of five others of the same class of ministers, and he is introduced as the last of the five. Up to this time, too, Barnabas is always mentioned first, and Paul second, while subsequently, Paul is as constantly named first, and spoken of as the chief speaker. (Acts, 13: 43, 46, and 15: 39.) It was, too, only after being thus ordained, we read that Paul and Barnabas exercised their official power, and 'ordained elders in every city.' [1] Neither do we know that Paul ever, before that time, baptized or administered the Lord's supper, or engaged in any other ecclesiastical function besides preaching. Paul, it is true, when first converted, (A. D. 35,) received the Holy Ghost immediately after being baptized. He was thus assured of his divine call to preach the gospel, at least, so far as it regarded his Jewish brethren and the proselyted Gentiles.[2] And as it admits of little doubt that he had been ordained and raised to the dignity of a presbyter in the Jewish synagogue,[3] he was at once qualified to act as a christian prophet or teacher, with great propriety and acceptance. In this capacity, therefore, without any other ordination or commission, he labored among the Hebrews and Grecian Jews, until A. D. 43 or 44, when he was favored with a personal vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, and was told by Him that he should be employed as an apostle to the Gentiles.[4] For this purpose he was directed to Antioch, where, in order that his divine commission and apostleship might be attested,

1) See Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. pp. 194, 199, 245, and as above referred to. Archbishop Wake, as above, and Rev. E. Kersall, in Waterland's Wks. vol. x. p. 22, § 27. Benson's Hist. of Plant. of Christ. vol. ii. c. 1.

2) Benson, in his History of the First Planting of Christianity, vol. i. c. 7, § 3 and 4, offers some weighty reasons to show that Ananias did not and could not confer the Holy Ghost, but that, after his baptism, Paul received from heaven spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers, and a revelation of the gospel, so far as regarded the Jews and proselyted Gentiles. But that he had no idea himself of preaching to the heathen till long afterwards. See also vol. ii. b. iii. c. 1 and 2.

3) Selden de Synod. b. ii. c. 6. § 2, p. 1323. Biscoe's Hist. of the Acts, p. 245.

4) Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. pp. 252, 253, and Benson's Hist. of the Plant. of Christ. vol. ii. c. 1, p. 16.

and an exemplar given for all future times, he was publicly and solemnly ordained; and then, for the first time, received from the Holy Spirit those additional gifts and miraculous powers, by which he was fully prepared for his high and holy calling.[1]

Accordingly, we find that it was not till Paul paid his third visit to Jerusalem, about the year 49, he was received and owned as an apostle by James, and Cephas, and John, and the chief of the Jewish apostles.[2] The fact, therefore, that Paul had for many years preached before this event took place, in no way militates against the conclusion that he was now for the first time publicly ordained, since all who received the Holy Ghost, and especially they who were filled with it, took that as a sufficient warrant and commission to exercise their gifts in christian assemblies. Such we know was the case with many of the ancient prophets, who, without any ecclesiastical standing, were authorized to declare the message of the Lord, some of these not being even of the tribe of Levi.[3] But as God was now about to institute churches among the Gentiles, and fully to organize and settle the church generally, it pleased Him, by the express direction of his Holy Spirit, to give us, in the case of Barnabas and Paul, an explicit record of the fact, the manner, and the necessity of ordination. 'The Lord,' says Lightfoot, 'did hereby set down a platform of ordaining ministers in the church of the Gentiles to future time.'[4] 'Thus Paul, says archbishop Wake, 'though he was called to be an apostle, not by man, but by Jesus Christ, was yet consecrated to be an apostle by the ordinary form of imposition of hands, after he had preached in the church for some time before.'[5] Or, to use the words of Skelton,[6] who is a high church authority. 'So sacred a thing is the succession of ordination, that the HOLY GHOST, who had already enabled Barnabas and Saul to preach the word, ordered them to be 'separated for the work whereunto HE had called them, by fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands;' that is, to be ordained; 'the SPIRIT of GOD hereby plainly showing, that HE himself would not break the successive order of mission established in the church.'

But it is further objected, that this could not have been an ordination, because Paul assures us, that he was made an apostle not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,

1) See enumerated and dwelt on, in Benson's Hist. vol. ii. p. 11, &c.
2) Gal. 2: 9, and Benson's Hist. vol. ii. pp. 249, 250.
3) See Plea for Presbytery, p. 35.
4) Wks. vol. iii. pp. 212, 213.
5) Ibid, p. 272.
6) See Wks. vol. iii. Disc. 71.

and God the Father.[1] But it is one thing to say he was not made, called, commissioned, or qualified by man, and quite another to say he was not publicly *recognised*, that is, *ordained* by man, in obedience to a positive divine command. The former, the apostle denies; the latter, he affirms. The former does not conflict with the latter, but, on the contrary, formed the ground upon which the latter was based, so that it was because he *had been* thus called of God he was afterwards ordained by men. Neither was the latter necessary to constitute Paul an apostle; nor had it any virtue by which to qualify and fit him for the office. We know not that any other apostle was thus ordained. But Paul's case was peculiar. He had not companied with Christ and the other twelve. His conversion and vision of the Saviour, were both miraculous. He was generally suspected and mistrusted. He was to be the great apostle of the Gentiles, and the first link in that ministerial chain which was to extend to the end of time. It was therefore necessary, that Paul, not as an apostle, but as a minister, should be thus formally and openly set apart by ordination.

It is further objected, that the work to which Paul was now set apart was a mere temporary mission, and that this, therefore, was no ordination. But this is a great mistake. The work upon which Paul was now to enter was his apostleship, or mission to the Gentiles. There is an evident reference in the record to the words of Christ, when he appeared to Paul at Jerusalem, and gave him his divine call. 'depart, for I *will* (that is, not now, but shortly at Antioch, by a solemn inauguration and ordination,) send thee far hence to the Gentiles.'[2] To this work, in fulfilment of this promise, and by the direct instructions of the Holy Ghost, he was now sent forth in company with Barnabas. Accordingly, being sent forth, they occupied not less than three years in their first tour;[3] and then 'Paul said unto Barnabas, *let us go again* and visit our brethren in *every city*, where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.'[4] In this second tour, they employed some four years more, without any renewed ordination, and then having returned on a visit to Antioch, they again went forth upon a third mission. It is, indeed, true, that, when they first returned to Antioch, they are said to have 'fulfilled the work for which they had been recommended to the grace of God.'[5] The original

1) Onderdonk, as above, p. 425.
2) Acts, 22 : 21. Barrington, vol. ii. p. 255.
3) Acts, 14 : 3.
4) Acts, 15 : 36.
5) Acts, 14 : 26.

word, however, (επληρωσαν,) simply means, 'they fully or faithfully performed the work'[1] But that they had not finished it in the sense of having completed it, is manifest from the fact, that, as soon as they had visited their brethren at Antioch, and gladdened their hearts by reporting their success, they again set forth upon the same work which terminated only with their lives.

Besides, even supposing that Barnabas and Paul had been previously ministers, and that this ordination referred only to their first subsequent mission of three years, are not presbyterian ministers solemnly set apart or installed with prayer and imposition of hands, *every time* they are called to enter upon some new charge? Whether, therefore, these words had reference, as we think plain, to their whole ministry, or only to a special exercise of it, this record must be considered as describing their ordination. Either view of the words does not alter the case, nor make that to be no ordination, which includes every thing that has ever been considered as the constitutive and essential parts of ordination. And besides, if God himself orders *a temporary* mission of His own apostle to be given by a plurality of presbyters, or teachers, and that too by solemn ordination; is there not much more reason to conclude, that He would require the same order to be followed when the mission is to be for a whole life? Every way, therefore, does this precedent enforce the law of presbyterian ordination.[2]

Although, therefore, bishop Onderdonk, has decided that this certainly was not an ordination,[3] he has certainly, in so doing, contradicted all authority, and reason, and himself too, since he allows, that 'it was a setting apart of those two apostles to a particular field of duty,'[4] which is as accurate a definition of ordination, as could well be framed. We may, then, be permitted to coincide in opinion with this last view of the case, and with the many learned men who have sustained it, and thus to conclude, that Paul and Barnabas, were at this time ordained.

It remains for us to prove, that they were thus ordained by presbyters. And to do this we require no great effort of ingenuity. They were ordained by 'certain prophets and teachers in the church that was at Antioch,' namely, Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen. Now who were these prophets and

1) It is so used evidently in Rom. 15: 19. See Plea for Presb. p. 147.
2 See Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ordin. part ii. p. 7.
3) Episc. Tested by Script.
4) Ibid.

teachers? The same individuals are called both prophets and teachers. In regard to extraordinary endowments, they were prophets; in regard to ordinary ministerial office, they were teachers. All prophets were teachers, though all teachers were not prophets. But both referred to the same ministerial grade, or order. Now, teachers were ordinary presbyters, who were distinguished from the extraordinary officers then in the church.[1] Every presbyter is a teacher, because this word designates the great business and duty to which he is called by the commission of Jesus Christ.[2] These teachers, when endowed with the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, were called prophets, and thus might the same individual be, at the same time, both a teacher, or an ordinary minister of Christ, and a prophet, or a teacher, supernaturally endowed. In this way only, can we understand the classification of officers given by the apostle in 1 Cor. 12: 28, and Eph. 4: 11; and the declaration here made, that these men were 'prophets and teachers.'[3]

Certain it is, that both prophets and teachers, whether considered as two classes, or as one only, were ranked below apostles. Such is the explicit teaching of archbishop Potter,[4] of Lord Barrington,[5] and of Saravia.[6] 'All teachers of the gospel,' says the latter, 'may be styled prophets.'[7] 'I am of opinion,' however, 'that these prophets were really such, and not metaphorically so called,' and that 'these apostles, evangelists, and prophets, were the first presbyters and bishops of the church of Jerusalem.'[8] 'There were now,' says Lightfoot, 'in the church of Antioch, five men which were both prophets and teachers, or who did not only instruct the people, and expound the scriptures, but had also the prophetic spirit, and were partakers of revelations.'[9] 'The prophets,' says bishop Blomfield, 'were probably of the presbyters.'[10] 'These prophets and teachers, were certainly not men of apostolic authority,' says Mr. Brewster.[11] 'These terms, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, do not include so many several orders or degrees of church officers, but rather different *denominations* conferred upon those officers which were in the church before, with relation to their

1) 1 Cor. 12: 28, and Eph. 4: 12.
2) Sadeel Oper. p. 600. Owen on Ordin. p. 40.
3) See Neander's Hist. of Plant. of Christ. vol. i. pp. 117, 122.
4) On Ch. Govt. pp. 92, 93, 102.
5) Wks. vol. ii. p. 256.
6) On the Priesthood, p. 84.
7) Ibid, p. 91.
8) Ibid, pp. 84, 85.
9) Wks. vol. iii. p. 210, and vol. viii. p. 456.
10) Lectures on the Acts of the Apostles. Lond. 1829. p. 110.
11) Lect. on the Acts, vol. i. p. 354.

*labors.*'[1] 'Under them,' (that is, apostles,) says bishop Sherlock, 'were placed pastors and teachers, who were comprehended under the general name of prophets.'[2]

Now these terms are here applied, without qualification or distinction, to the whole five individuals enumerated. These ministers are also represented as all belonging to the church of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas having labored there for a year, and the others being probably fixed, and resident in the place, for they ministered unto the Lord, 'which must be understood of the service of God in their assemblies, especially in celebrating the eucharist.'[3] The labors of Paul and Barnabas in this church, too, were apparently designed to prepare them for preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles, when ordained.[4] For, as it is recorded, the first converts at Antioch were made by the preaching of certain men of Cyprus and Cyrene, and it was after hearing of their success, the apostles sent Barnabas there, who afterwards went himself to Tarsus, and brought Saul there. Through their efforts, these other teachers were doubtless raised up among them.[5] Bishop Jeremy Taylor fully admits the same thing, saying, that these men were stated and regular ministers in that church.[6] Such also is the view taken of them by Lightfoot. 'And it seems,' he says, 'that the separation of Paul and Barnabas to the ministry, was done by the stated ministers of that church, and not by others that came thither. . . . But these were both prophets and constant preachers too.'[7] This same learned episcopalian adds: 'And so the other three, Simon, Lucius, and Manaen, understanding what the Lord meant, and having used another solemn day in fasting and prayer, lay their hands upon them, and set them apart by ordination, according as the ordaining of elders among the Jews was by a triumvirate, or by three elders. This is the second imposition of hands since the gospel began, which did not confer the Holy Ghost with it; for these two were full of the Holy Ghost before; and this is the first ordination of elders since the gospel, that was used out of the land of Israel. Which right the Jewish canons would confine only to that land. Which circumstances, well considered, with the employment that these two were to go about, and this manner of their

1) The episcopal author reviewed in Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 299.

2) Sherlock's Wks. vol. iii. p. 281.

3) Such are the words of Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 48. See Bloomfield's N. T. in loco. and Crit. Digest.

4) Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. p. 287.

5) Acts, 11: 23, 24. Ibid, p. 285.

6) In Cler. Dom. and Episc. Asserted. Wks. vol. vii. pp. 20, 15, and 82.

7) Wks. vol. viii. pp. 456, 457.

sending forth,' no better reason, I suppose, can be given of this present action, than that the Lord did hereby set down a platform of ordaining ministers in the church of the Gentiles to future times.'

But if these were the regular ministers of the church of Antioch, we have, in this circumstance, a clear demonstration that they could not have been of any order higher than presbyters, since there is no canon more indubitably established than this, that there cannot be a plurality of prelates in any one church. That they were 'ordinary ministers,' that is, 'presbyters,' is admitted by Mr. Thorndike, who is a defender of prelacy.[1] He therefore acknowledges, that here we have 'the presbytery of Antiochia,' and that they received the spirit for this very work of ordination.[2]

As to the idea of Dr. Hammond and others, that these men were prelates, it is sufficiently confuted by Whitby, who remarks,[3] 'Nor could he have had any temptation to have made the other three there named, bishops, but that he finds them laying on of hands,' v. 2. 'And, indeed, if there were so many bishops as he hath given us in Judea, (Acts, 15,) in Syria, and Cilicia, here, and so many ordained in all other churches, as he saith, (ch. 14: 20,) is it not wonderful that St. Paul, in all his travels, should never meet with, resort to, or be entertained by, any one of them, but only by the brethren at large? or, that he should write to the churches of the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, before he went, bound, to Rome, and never salute any bishops there, or give any instructions to them, or so much as ever mention that he had ordained any elders, that is, saith he, bishops there?'

These men then were, and must have been, simple presbyters of the church of Antioch. As such, they received special instructions from the Holy Spirit, in order to give to the church a perpetual model, to set apart Barnabas and Saul, by ordination.[4] They accordingly proceeded to separate them, and to send them forth to the work of the gospel ministry.[5] And thus are we taught by the Holy Spirit, first, in suggesting this whole proceeding, and, secondly, in inspiring this recorded account of it, that presbyters are the divinely

1) Prim. Govt. of the Ch. ch. v. p. 48.

2) Ibid, ch. viii. p. 84.

3) Comment. Fol. vol. i. p. 700.

4) 'It was revealed unto them, that they should set apart Barnabas and Saul to that great work for which Christ had designed them.' Lardner, in Wks. vol. x. p. 143.

5) 'And being sent forth by this special appointment of heaven, they went to Seleucia, and thence they sailed to Cyprus.' Lardner, as above.

instituted ministers of ordination. We will only add to what has been said, the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Hinds, of Oxford. Ordination, he teaches, was vested in the church, that is, with the representatives of the church. These 'were made formally to ordain the two extraordinary apostles to the Gentiles,' and, 'in the case of the ordination of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, THESE WERE PRESBYTERS ALONE.'[1] Now, let any single case of prelatical reordination, similar to this, be produced from the scriptures, and we will give up the argument. Till then, we claim the undoubted authority of God's word for presbyterian ordination, without the aid, assistance, or authority of any superior order whatever.

1) Hist. of Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. ii. p. 35.

# CHAPTER VIII.

PRESBYTERS ARE, BY DIVINE RIGHT, CLOTHED WITH THE POWER OF ORDINATION. THE SUBJECT CONTINUED, AND PROOF GIVEN, THAT THE ORDINATION OF TIMOTHY WAS CONFERRED BY PRESBYTERS.

§ 1. *The passage in Tim. 4: 14, explained, and its manifest proof of presbyterian ordination argued.*

But we have another example of presbyterian ordination, which, the more it is examined, will be found the more conclusive and satisfactory, and that is, the ordination of Timothy, recorded in 1 Tim. 4: 14. 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbyters.' It would seem to us, that no possible language could more unequivocally testify to the fact, that a plurality of presbyters ordained Timothy to the work of the ministry; and that here, also, we are most positively taught that presbyterian ordination is the true, original, divine, and apostolical order. That Timothy was endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, all parties admit. These, as was usually the case, were conferred by the hand of an apostle, St. Paul, (2 Tim. 1: 6.) In thus endowing Timothy, the apostle was guided by the opinion of those prophetic men, who had pointed him out as a fit and chosen recipient, and foretold his entrance upon the ministry, and his eminence in it. (1 Tim. 1: 18.) And in confirmation of this divine call, Timothy, we are told, had been publicly ordained to the work of the ministry, by the imposition of the hands of a presbytery, that is, by a plurality of presbyters. We have here, therefore, a description of the ministerial office, which is called a gift;[1] the remarkable manner in which

1) 'Your gift, *σν σοι*, being a periphrasis for your, the substantive being employed for the adjective.

Timothy had been prepared for it: the eminence to which he should aspire; the mode in which he had been solemnly inducted into the office; and the whole, is, therefore, an exhortation to Timothy to discharge faithfully and fully these ministerial duties. Such, to any unbiased mind, would be the teaching of this passage. The conclusion, would also be inevitable, that, under the immediate sanction of the inspired apostle, ordination was originally conferred by the imposition of the hands of presbyters. And hence, as no change of order was subsequently made by divine authority, it must have been the purpose of Christ, that ordination should always be performed through the ministry of presbyters. Presbyterian ordination, therefore, is not only valid, but is the only ordination sanctioned by the word of God.

### § 2. *The objection, that the ordainers of Timothy were prelates, answered.*

But such a conclusion as this never could be admitted by prelatists, and it was, of course, necessary to find some objections by which its force might be obviated. By noticing these, and exposing their weakness and futility, we will substantiate the view taken of this passage, by the mass of the reformed churches.

The earliest objection to this interpretation was, that those engaged in this ordination were all prelates, and not presbyters, and that it is an argument, therefore, for prelatical and not for presbyterian ordination. This view was first presented by Chrysostom, and from him adopted by the fathers generally.[1] But this interpretation cannot possibly be admitted. It is a contradiction, and not an explanation, of scripture. It might as well be said, that when Paul here speaks of Timothy he meant Titus, as that when he names presbyters he intended prelates. No church or commmentator can pretend to translate the Bible, while he exchanges its terms for words of an opposite meaning. In this way the Bible might be turned into the Koran, and our republican constitution become the basis of a despotism. Paul affirms, that Timothy was ordained by the hands of presbyters, while Chrysostom avers, that 'he does not here speak of presbyters at all, (*περι πρεσβυτερων,*) but of prelates, (*περι επισκοπων.*)[2] The ignorance of Paul must thus be corrected by the wisdom of Chrysostom; and the corruptions and prelatical usurpations of the fourth cen-

1) See Jameson's Sum of the Episc. Controv. pp. 11, 12.

2) Comm. in loco.

tury, interpret for us the truth and order of apostolic christianity. Besides, where could so many prelates come from, to Derbe or Lystra, where this ordination probably took place?[1] The presbytery, therefore, must have been composed of all the presbyters belonging to one or other of the places mentioned.[2] This was the view advocated by Aerius, and by Jerome, in his epistle to Evagrius, who, from this very passage, infers that bishops and presbyters were the same. Ambrose also candidly admits, that 'the writings of the apostle do not, in every point, answer the ordination now used in the church.'[3] The Rhemist translators accordingly render it, 'with imposition of the hands of priesthood,' and justify their translation by the canon of the ancient council of Carthage, requiring all the priests to lay their hands on the head of the priest taking orders, along with the bishop's hand.[4] Chrysostom found that in his day, prelates had confined the power of ordination exclusively to their own order, and hence he was driven to the profane stratagem of making the Bible speak in accordance with that custom, though contrary to common sense: just as, for the same reason, he and others endeavored to give to the word bishop the sense of prelate, because there was no other word in the scriptures by which such an office could possibly be sustained. The word presbytery never can mean a single prelate, or any number of such officers; and as Timothy was ordained by a church court, composed of presbyters, and not by any single individual or president, he was presbyterially and not prelatically ordained. Even, however, were we to translate presbytery by 'a court of prelates or apostles,' what would be the conclusion? Evidently this — that in apostolic times, the term presbyter was a general title for all ministers of the gospel; and that while the twelve, considered in reference to their extraordinary endowments, were called apostles: as ordinary ministers, and the exemplars of all future ministers, they were, *and were known as*, presbyters. In order to make this point clear, these apostles are careful, when officiating at ordination, (supposing now that Paul did preside on this occasion,) to do so as presbyters, and not as apostles; as a presbytery, and not as an apostolate. This act was an ordi-

1) It was after Barnabas and Saul had parted asunder, that Paul met with Timothy, at Lystra, and circumcised him, and resolved to take him as his companion, upon the good report of the brethren, (Acts, 15: 39.) So that, when he was ordained, there was, it would seem, no other apostolic man present, much less a college of apostles.

2) Such is the opinion of Lord Barrington. Wks. vol. ii. p. 89.

3) In Ephes. 4.

4) See in loco.

nary exercise, therefore, of their ministerial functions, and not peculiar to them, or to their order as apostles. This subterfuge, then, to which Bellarmine and some modern prelatists have retreated, will not help the cause of prelacy at all. 'There was,' says archbishop Potter, 'a presbytery or college of *elders*, in the place where Timothy was ordained, for it was by the imposition of their hands he received his orders.'[1] Such also 'is the opinion of Mr. Hinds,[2] and of Dr. Willet.[3] The word presbytery, here, cannot refer to prelates, else, as Whitaker teaches, there would be more than one bishop in one place;[4] and because, to make it a council of bishops, is to beg the question in dispute, which is, whether there was any distinction between presbyters and bishops in scripture.[5] But of this, more anon.

§ 3. *The objection, that the word presbytery does not refer to a company of presbyters, but to the office, answered, and Calvin vindicated.*

Prelatists, being driven from this position, were led to advance the preposterous idea, that the word presbytery does not refer to the individuals, by whom Timothy was ordained, but to the office to which he was introduced. They, therefore, translate the passage, 'neglect not the gift of presbytery, that is, the office of priesthood, which was given thee by prophecy, with,'[6] &c. Now, it must be admitted, that the word rendered presbytery, *might be* translated in this way. This, no one will dispute. But, this being admitted, the question is, whether the word, *in this place*, can be understood in this sense. A word, simply and abstractly, may have a very different meaning from the same word when conjoined with others; and a word which may have two or more senses singly, when found in connection with others, must have that meaning attached to it, which will give us a proper and intelgible sense, and not that which will convert the passage into nonsense. Now, we affirm, *that the word* presbytery, in this place, does not mean the office of presbyter, but must mean the assembly of presbyters, and in proof of our assertion we offer the following reasons:

In the first place, the word πρεσβυτερίον, *presbytery*, does not

1) On Ch. Govt. pp. 105, 67, 267.
2) Hist. of Rise and Progress of Christ. vol. ii. pp. 34, 35.
3) Syn. Pap. pp. 273, 81.
4) Prælect. Controv. 2. c. 5. p. 284, in Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. p. 366.
5) See this objection handled by Dr. Mason, Wks. vol. iii. pp. 167–169.
6) Archbp. Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 267.

properly refer to the office, but to an assembly of officers. The former meaning is conveyed by the word πρεσβύτιον, which means *munus seniorum*, the office of presbyter. No authority, therefore, can be found for attaching such a sense to the word abstractly considered.[1] In the second place, when we inquire into the meaning of the term as used in scripture, we find, that it uniformly means, an assembly of presbyters. The only exception is in the apochryphal book of Susannah, 5: 50, where some few editions read πρεσβύτεροι, presbyters, instead of πρεσβύτιον, the presbyterate, the office being certainly understood.[2] Wolfius, Vitringa, Koppe, and Pfaffius, allege, that the sense of 'a senate of presbyters' is the only meaning which can, in all cases, answer to the Hebrew words, and to the Jewish customs.[3] In the New Testament, this term is used to characterize the council of elders or presbyters, that is, the senate or sanhedrim, in Luke, 22: 26, and Acts, 22: 5. To this opinion, Dr. Bowden has been constrained to give his adherence, allowing, that the term presbytery 'signifies an ecclesiastical council.'[4] This was also admitted by bishop Beveridge,[5] who says, 'St. Paul says Timothy received the Spirit by the laying on of his hands, notwithstanding the presbytery joined with him in it.' We are under the necessity, therefore, according to all the rules of interpretation, to understand the word in its ordinary meaning, as it was employed by the Jews, in their ecclesiastical usages, and as it was familiar to the apostles, in the passage before us. In the third place, this prelatical interpretation is equally contrary to the opinion of the fathers. According to Suicer, the word in the Greek fathers, denotes an assembly, congregation, or college of presbyters.[6] Ignatius frequently uses the word, and very explicitly defines it, saying, 'what else is the presbytery than a sacred assembly, the counsellors and assessors of the bishop.'[7] Irenæus, speaking of these officers, says, they were those, 'who, with their succession, received a certain charisma of truth.'[8] Theodoret says, 'he here calls those a presbytery who had received the apostolical grace. Thus did the divine scriptures call those who were honored

1) See Stephanus, Scapula, Donnegan, and all the Lexicographers, in verbo.

2) Brötschneider Lex. in Nov. Test. in verbo.

3) Wolfii Curæ Phil. vol. iv. p. 465. Vitringa de Syn. Vet. p. 597. Pfaffius, l. c.

4) See Wks. on Episc. vol. ii. p. 86, very doubtful, p. 116, no easy matter, p. 117.

5) Wks. vol. ii. pp. 121, 122.

6) Suicer Thesaurus Eccl. ex Patr. Groec. tom. ii. p. 824.

7) Ep. ad Trallianos and to Ephes. See Usher's Episc. and Presb. Govt. Conjd.

8) L. iv. c. 43, in Whitby's Comment. in loco.

in Israel, a senate (γερουσιαν) or presbytery.'[1] Chrysostom, Theophylact, Œcumenius, Sedulius, and Primasius, also refer the word to an assembly of persons.[2] Epiphanius relates, that this term was quoted by Aerius in support of presbyterian ordination.[3] While Jerome, in his commentary on Titus, brings this same passage to prove, that bishop and presbyter are one and the same.[4] Cyprian uses this word also, for a consistory of presbyters.[5] Cornelius, bishop of Rome, employs the term to signify, the concurrence of his presbyters. Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen, have been quoted to the same effect.[6] The very ancient Syriac version renders the words, 'with the hands of the presbytery.' The Ethiopic version, 'with the hands of the bishops.' The Arabic, and the Vulgate, 'with the hands of presbyters.'[7] And here, before passing, let me ask every impartial reader, what we are to think of those defenders of the prelacy, who affirm, as Mr. Palmer does, 'that this term was understood by the Greek fathers, to mean bishops, (that is, prelates,) and by the Latin fathers, to mean the presbyterate;[8] and who affirm, as Mr. Perceval unblushingly does, that 'ALL the commentators understood this place to mean, the college of apostles.'[9]

In the fourth place, this interpretation is rejected by the whole host of modern commentators, prelatical and anti-prelatical, with almost no exceptions.[10] 'Estius thinks, the *elder-ship* of Ephesus is here meant.' Bengelius says, *male legunt nonulli*, του πρεσβυτερου, 'some badly interpret this of the office of a presbyter.'[11] 'I cannot,' says Dr. Bloomfield, 'agree with Benson, that *the elders* did not confer this gift. They, it should seem, contributed to confer it.'[12] 'The presbytery, or all the presbyters at Derbe or Lystra . . . laid their hands on thee,' says Lord Barrington.[13] 'They,' that is, Timothy and Titus, 'were ordained by imposition of the hands of

1) In Suicer.
2) See in ibid, and Jameson, as above.
3) Ibid.
4) Ibid.
5) Lib. ii. Ep. 8, and 10.
6) See Boyse's Anc. Episcop. p. 246.
7) See Walton's Polyglott in loco.
8) On the Church, vol. ii. p. 413.
9) On the Apost. Success. pp. 23, 24. This work is one tissue of Jesuitical misstatements, which, in their intended sense, are open untruths. The author is evidently *entirely ignorant* of the system he opposes.
10) See Poole's Synopsis Crit. in loco. Crit. Sacri. ibid. See Bloomfield's Crit. Digest and N. T. Macknight, Rosenmuller, Koppe, Slade on the Epistles, Benson in loco, Diodati's Annot., The Dutch Annotations, Poole's Comment., Whitby, &c. &c. See also Jordan, (of Oxford,) Review of Tradition, p. 80. Dr. Hammond in loco. Usher's Episc. and Presb. Govt. Conjoined, p. 9.
11) See in Koppe Comm. in loco.
12) Crit. Digest, vol. viii. p. 256.
13) Wks. vol. ii. p. 89.

the presbytery,' says Saravia, 'no less than the others who were subsequently set over the church in every city.[1] Stillingfleet has also ably supported this interpretation.[2] It has been, however, triumphantly alleged, by almost every prelatical writer for the last century,[3] that Calvin gave to this view the weight of his great authority. But this is an entire misrepresentation for propping up a sinking cause, and can only be paralleled by the attempt of these same writers to make Calvin a witness in favor of prelacy. It is true, that in his Institutes, his earliest work, composed when only about twenty years of age, Calvin did say, that, as he then apprehended the passage, the word referred, rather to ordination itself, than to the company of presbyters.[4] But in the very same passage, he manifests his doubt, for he introduces his remarks by saying, 'it is not certain.'[5] In the same work, Calvin further refers to this passage, as connected with 'the introduction of true presbyters and ministers of the church into their office.'[6] But what is most to be observed is, that in his later writings, as in his commentary on this passage, a work, at least, as common as his Institutes, Calvin explicitly declares, that 'in his judgment, those who think *presbytery* to be a collective noun, put for the college of presbyters, think rightly.[7]

In the fifth place, we remark, that this interpretation destroys the sense of the passage, and must, therefore, be rejected. It imputes to the apostle an absurdity, from which, had prelatists sufficient reverence, they would shrink. For in what conceivable sense can an office be said to have hands, and yet it was 'by the hands of the presbytery,' that is, by 'the office of a presbyter,' that Timothy received his gift. Moreover, this gift referred to the qualifications imparted to him for this very office, and thus we are taught, by this interpretation, that Timothy received the qualifications for the office of presbyter, by the hands of the office of presbyter. And then this gift was given by the hands of an abstract

1) On the Priesthood, p. 116.

2) Iren. p. 275, &c. See also Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 84, 85, Willet Syn. Pap., p. 273.

3) See e g. Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 267, and Bp. Onderdonk's Episc. tested by Script. Sinclair's Apost. Succ., p. 23.

4) Inst. B. iv. ch. iii. § 16.

5) It will be at once seen by a reader, that this uncertainty refers to the interpretation of these words, because if they refer to the company of presbyters, then it would be certain that ordination was administered 'by more pastors than one,' but if not, 'by the act of a single pastor.' See the passage.

6) Instit. B. iv. ch xix. § 28.

7) Comment. in 1 Tim. 4: 14. 'Presbyterium qui hic collectivum nomen esse putant, pro collegio presbyterorum positum, recte sentiunt meo judice.'

office, which, in the nature of things, could not give it at all. All sense, therefore, must be sacrificed at the shrine of prelacy; and in order to do honor to bishops, we must be satisfied to receive, on implicit faith, what cannot be brought within the reach of any intelligible comprehension.[1]

In the sixth and last place, this interpretation may as well be abandoned, because, even if admitted, it is as fatal to the cause of prelacy as the one for which we contend. For on this supposition, Timothy was only admitted to the order of presbyters, and is thus unbishoped of his prelatic dignity; and since he is here required as such, and on the ground of this presbyterate, to ordain other presbyters, (1 Tim. 5:22,) we are led to the very comfortable and orthodox conclusion, that in the apostles' days, presbyters were the only order of permanent ministers, and that they alone ordained their successors in office. This conclusion must follow, in every view of the matter, and is forced from the reluctant consciences of the most avowed advocates of prelacy. Thus Hadrian Saravia says, 'Timothy, whom he (Paul) had ordained a presbyter, he also calls a bishop.' Again, he places Timothy and Titus among 'the first presbyters whom the apostles and evangelists ordained.'[2] And if, as archbishop Wake declares, 'Timothy came at the head' of those presbyters who met Paul at Miletus, (Acts, 20:) then it is beyond controversy, that he was still in the order of a simple presbyter.[3]

Dr. Chapman, in his Sermons to Presbyterians,[4] says, that 'by the usual explanation of the passage, he is willing to abide. It is in strict accordance with the practice of the church for many centuries. Ordination, with us, to the office of a presbyter, is always celebrated by a bishop, with the concurrence of two or more presbyters.' Now with this explanation of the passage, as thus certainly referring to the ordination of a presbyter, we also are willing to abide. It brings us directly to our conclusion, that as Timothy was now really ordained — and that, too, by a presbytery — so was he, of necessity, ordained to the office of a presbyter. Timothy, therefore, was a presbyter, and not an apostle, and he received ordination from a presbytery, and not from a prelacy.

1) The word presbytery cannot be the genitive to the word gift, because two other genitives intervene. See Owen on Ordination, p. 44.

2) On the Priesthood, pp. 109, 116, 137.

3) On the Apost. Fathers, p. 11, § 15.

4) P. 234.

§ 4. *The objection that Paul alone ordained Timothy answered; in which* 2 *Tim.* 1 : 6, *is explained.*

Another objection, however, is brought forward in order to raise a cloud of dust, through which the discomfited ranks of the prelacy may effect a retreat. Paul, it is said, in another place, expressly declares, that he ordained Timothy, who was, therefore, a prelate. The place referred to is 2 Tim. 1 : 6; 'wherefore, I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.' Now we have here no less than four most unwarrantable assumptions. It is assumed, that the reference here is to ordination, whereas it is plainly to supernatural gifts, which were communicable only by an apostle. It is assumed, that there is a reference to the ordination related in the first epistle, when there is every reason for a contrary opinion. It is assumed, that even if this passage does refer to the previous one, it will militate against the doctrine of presbyterian ordination, which is there unequivocally taught. It is assumed, that Paul had any other than presbyterian ordination; or ever assisted at ordination in any other capacity than as a presbyter, which we think has been undeniably overthrown. Finally, it is assumed by some, that in neither passage is there any reference to ordination at all. Here, then, is a mountain weight of inferences, all piled upon the back of a tortoise — which rests upon nihility.

This passage, we contend, refers to supernatural gifts, and not to ordination.[1] 1. Such is the natural interpretation of the passage, which would most readily suggest itself to every attentive reader. That supernatural gifts were at this time common in the church, is on all hands admitted. That the apostles alone were, at least as a general rule, empowered to communicate them, has also been clearly established.[2] That in the communication of these gifts the apostles employed the ceremony of imposition of hands, and that they did so as individuals, and not in their united capacity, is equally certain.[3] This passage, therefore, would appear to be a literal record of the fact of such a communication of spiritual gifts to Timothy by the hands of Paul. 2. No other reference of

1) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. vii. p. 161.

2) See Lord Barrington's Wks. passim, and vol. ii. Essay ii. p. 72, &c.; and vol. i. Essay i.; Benson's Hist. of the Planting of Christ'y, and his Essay on the Miraculous Gifts; Epiph. Hæres. 21, Simon.

3) Acts, 19 : 6; Acts, 8 : 16; 1 Thess. 1 : 6, and 2 : 1; 1 Cor. 2 : 4, 5.

the passage is necessary. Every word is by this interpretation fully and literally explained. But by applying it to the subject of Timothy's ordination, the passage becomes difficult and obscure. That ordination, as the apostle had already reminded Timothy, was conferred by the hands of the presbytery, and not by his hand; and were it here alluded to, we might justly expect some harmonizing expressions, especially as there is no reason to believe, that the apostle was at Lystra or Derbe when the event took place. And how is it reconcilable to good sense or Paul's humility, for him to assume or arrogate to the laying on of his hands, only, that which was due to the laying on of the hands of many others. 3. Any other reference of the passage is perfectly gratuitous, since in no other portion of the New Testament do we read of an ordination performed by a single individual. 4. This interpretation is required by the language. The word translated gift occurs sixteen times, and in eleven of these cases, it signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit, and never once an office.[1] For, in the passage in 1 Tim. 4:14, the reference in the term gift is evidently to those endowments, in consequence of which the presbytery ordained Timothy, and not to the office into which they thus introduced him. To translate it, therefore, by the word office, is to set up a private interpretation against the undoubted and multiplied usage of scripture. The word rendered 'stir up' is evidently used as the counterpart to the term gift. It indicates an internal quality, and signifies properly, to rouse sluggishness, and to call into action some dormant faculty.[2] It is so employed by Clemens, who says, 'let his faith, then, be stirred up in us.'[3]

5. This interpretation is necessary to any intelligible meaning. We can well conceive how the apostle should exhort Timothy to stir up, to foster, and to increase the gift of supernatural faith or wisdom,[4] with which he had been endowed; but we cannot imagine how Timothy would set about the business of 'stirring up the office of the ministry that was in him.' The presbyterian view is rational, as well as consistent; the prelatical is absurd and contradictory. 6. The context requires, that we should refer the words to some such supernatural gift. Paul alludes to 'the unfeigned faith that

1) See Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii. pp. 87 and 73.

2) See Bloomfield's Crit. Dig. and Wetstein in loco, with the examples.

3) Ep. to the Corinth. § 27. See also the Septuagint in Gen. 45:27; Mac. 13:7.

4) Matt. 17:21, 20; 1 Cor. 14:23, &c. See Whitby, Comment. in loco.

was in Timothy,' and being persuaded that he had received and possessed this gift, he therefore ('*wherefore*') put him in remembrance to stir up this gift. He goes on to say, 'for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power,' &c., that is, of undaunted fortitude and courageous boldness;[1] 'be not thou, therefore, ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.' Now such a degree of faith, — which was eminently adapted to the condition in which the first preachers of the gospel were placed, — is expressly enumerated among the supernatural endowments then bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and is also shown to have characterized the apostles and their coadjutors, by contrasting their lives previously and subsequently to its reception.[2] 7. Finally, this interpretation is sustained by eminent prelatists. Archbishop Wake refers the word to the extraordinary powers of the Holy Spirit.[3] So also does Lord Barrington:[4] bishop Hoadly;[5] Mr. Jordan;[6] Whitby;[7] Stillingfleet;[8] bishop Bilson:[9] and Mr. Goode.[10] Dr. Bloomfield says, '*the gift*' must, as appears from what follows, denote the supernatural gifts of the Spirit imparted by St. Paul, in setting him apart to the ministry.[11] The ancient commentators and the earlier moderns have rightly seen,' says this same learned episcopalian, 'that it must mean the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.' So much for the first and second assumptions involved in the prelatic theory.

But it is further assumed, that if this passage be made to refer to the one in 1 Tim. 4: 14, it will nullify our inference in favor of presbyterian ordination. But how this conclusion follows, we confess is to us unintelligible. 'The meaning of these words,' says Dr. Chauncy,[12] 'compared with what is said upon the matter in 2 Tim. 1: 6, may be fully expressed in the following paraphrase.' 'Improve the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which I imparted to you, in an extraordinary measure, according to the prophecies which went before concerning you, when you was separated to the work of the ministry, with the laying on of the hands of the consistory of presbyters.' A similar harmony of the two passages is given by Lord Bar-

1) πνεῦμα. See Rosenmuller and Henz.
2) 1 Cor. 12: 7–10; Lord Barrington's Wks. vol. ii.
3) Apost. Fath. Prel. Disc. § 17, p. 32.
4) As above.
5) See in Wks. on Episc. vol. i. p. 146.
6) Of Oxford, Review of Tradition, p. 81.
7) Comment. in loco.
8) Irenic. p. 275, &c.
9) In ibid. See also Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 247.
10) Div. Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. p. 123.
11) Crit. Digest, in loco.
12) Dud. Lec. p. 36, in Presb. Ord. Vind. p. 51.

rington, and others.[1] The two passages may thus be both referred to ordination, and yet be perfectly reconciled with the interpretation for which we contend. Besides, 'these two passages,' says the Rev. T. Hartwell Horne,[2] 'of St. Paul's epistles to Timothy, are of equal authority, and therefore prove, that the presbytery joined with the apostle in the imposition of hands.' It is hence evident, that the apostle would not ordain Timothy, even with the assistance of Barnabas, but having erected a presbytery, he hands him over to that body for ordination.[3] Presbyters, therefore, even in this view, concurred in the ordination of Timothy, and were associated by the apostle as copartners in the work. The *designed* testimony of the apostle, is thus afforded to presbyterian ordination. Hence, as we have seen, it has ever been a rule, that at least three presbyters should unite with the bishop in laying on hands in the ordination of presbyters. This rule is distinctly prescribed by the church of England,[4] where there is an evident reference to this passage in Timothy.[5] Hence, too, the doctrine stated by Mr Palmer, as held by Jewell, Hooker, and Field, 'that a mere presbyter might confer every order except the episcopate;' in other words, that the apostolic succession of the presbyters might be continued *by presbyters*, the episcopate being laid aside or lost.[6] Besides, we have already shown, that Paul and Barnabas never received any christian ordination but that given by presbyters. And, therefore, if they did unite in this ordination, it was in their ordinary ministerial character, as presbyters, and for the purpose of communicating to Timothy that same presbyterian ordination they had themselves received. As to the attempt to prove that the prepositions 'by' and 'with,' here employed, are intended to convey different ideas; and to teach, that the ordination was conferred 'by' Paul, and that the presbyters only concurred 'with' him; it is equally puerile and useless. It is puerile, because these terms are employed promiscuously in the New Testament,[7] and in the best authorities, and both imply the instrumental or efficient cause.[8] The preposition, therefore, translated 'with,' expresses the manner

1) Wks. vol. ii. pp. 88, 89.

2) The Conf. of the Ch. of Eng. to Apost. Precept, p. 11.

3) See Acts, 14: 23; and Acts, 16: 1; and 1 Tim. 4: 14.

4) Ordination Service and Canon, 35.

5) See Essays on the Church, p. 251.

6) Essays on the Church, p. 251.

7) 1 Tim. 1: 18; Acts, 15: 4, 12; and 14: 27, 12; Acts, 5: 26; and 17: 11; and 24: 3; 2 Cor. 7: 15; Titus, 2: 1, 5, &c. &c.

8) Can any lexicographer be produced who denies that μετα, with a genitive, often signifies *by*, or *by means of?*

in which Timothy was ordained, that is, by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.[1] Besides, imposition of hands never was used in the apostolic or proximate ages to signify mere assent or approbation, but some authoritative communication of power or office. And thus are prelatists driven to make new Greek grammars, and to annihilate the meaning of the ceremony in question, in order to support their assumptions. But puerile as is this theory, it is equally useless, both on their interpretation and our own. For if, as they say, these presbyters were apostles, then they had as good a right as Paul to impose hands, and as much power to communicate gifts; while on our view of the passage, the first preposition, whatever it means, refers to the gift, that is, the supernatural endowment; and the second, to the ordination, which is consequently referred to the presbyters alone, with no mention whatever of the concurrence of the apostle. But in neither case will the interpretation given substantiate prelatical ordination by a single individual, or by prelates alone; while it does manifestly authenticate the ordination of presbyters. And whether this is done '*by*' their hands or '*with*' their hands, is a scholastic nicety about which we have little concern, and which may be referred to the same category with that of Dr. Eck, the great champion of Rome, who at once silenced Luther, by declaring, that 'the pope was not universal bishop, but only bishop of the universal church.' If Paul presided, and the presbyters united in the act, then it follows, either that these presbyters did or did not possess the power of transmitting to Timothy a ministerial investiture of office. If they did, then, of course, the power of ordination is inherent in presbyters. If they did not, then was their concurrence, as Mr. Faber argues, 'an idle and inexplicable mockery, which, under such an aspect, might justly be pronounced to nullify the whole transaction.'[2]

§ 5. *The objection, that neither of these passages refer to ordination, answered, and the argument for the presbyterial ordination of Timothy concluded.*

But prelatists will not be worsted. Conscious, therefore, of the weakness of these pleas, they have overwhelmed all

1) See this whole subject admirably treated in Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 154, &c. See also Owen on Ordin. p. 47. Dr. Rice in Evang. Mag. vol. ix. pp. 545 and 617; and Plea for Presbytery, ed. 2d, p. 19; and Presb. Defended.

2) On the Albigenses, p. 554, on the case of Pelagius.

opposition by declaring, that, after all, neither passage has any reference to ordination at all, but to something else.[1] Well! let this also pass, and what then? Why then, truly, we must find our authority for ordination in some other quarter than the Bible, and one theory is quite as good as another, and neither, by divine authority. Either ordination is not enjoined or required; or otherwise we must conclude that the only ordination revealed to us in the New Testament, is presbyterian ordination. For if the accounts of the ordination of Paul and Barnabas, and of Timothy, are not records of ordination, then is there no information as to the form, or order, of this work in the whole Bible. But on the other hand, if fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands, are the elements which constitute ordination, and if these are combined in no other ecclesiastical act connected with the ministry, then were these occurrences both cases of ordination. We have in the New Testament, other statements which clearly imply the existence of some form or order of ordination; but in no other passages than these, have we any *examples* given, of what that form and order actually is. Now on the supposition that Christ and his apostles had designed that there should be three orders in the ministry of the church, with distinct and different powers and forms of consecration, as in the theory of the prelacy, we cannot but think there would have been preserved to us formal directions as to each of these orders; so that by one form and order prelates should be consecrated; by another, presbyters; and by a third, deacons. And the very fact, that in the New Testament we either find no such models, or only those before us, and, therefore, only one form or order of ordination, and that strictly presbyterian, irresistibly forces upon us the conclusion, that there was in the first age of the church, and as constituted by the apostles, but one order of ministers, to wit, presbyters, and but one mode of ordination, that is, the presbyterian.

This inference follows, whether we regard these passages as distinct or as referable to the same occasion. In the former case, the inference is plain. In the latter case, it is equally clear that the power of transmitting the ministerial office resides in presbyters, since the apostle is, in this view, made to approve of their independent exercise of this power, or at least to associate presbyters with himself, as his successors in the ministry, in the solemn act.

1) Bishop Onderdonk, Wks. on Episcop. pp. 426, 427.

# CHAPTER IX.

PRESBYTERS ARE CLOTHED WITH THE POWER OF ORDINATION. THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

## § 1. *The ordinations referred to in Acts*, 14: 23, *were presbyterial.*

A THIRD instance of presbyterial ordination may be found in the record, in Acts, 14: 23, where it is said of Paul and Barnabas, 'and when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed, with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.' Now this Barnabas, who was a candidate with Matthias, for the vacant apostleship, (Acts, 1: 23,) was no more than an ordinary minister. If the opinion of several of the ancient fathers, as Clement, Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Dorotheus is to be held, then he was one of the seventy disciples, who were, as we have seen, and as Hooker expressly calls them, presbyters.[1] Or, if the opinion is to be entertained, which was urged by the venerable Bede, that his conversion is related in the fourth chapter of the book of Acts, then Barnabas was first ordained to the ministry by the presbyters of Antioch, as already noticed. In either case, he could be only a presbyter, or ordinary minister, however extraordinarily endowed. And yet did the apostle associate him with him in the frequent ordination of other presbyters, in the various churches, which they visited together. Indeed, it would seem evident, that, in the performance of this ministerial rite, the apostle acted as an exemplar to the church in all future time, and that, for this end, he submitted, to be himself formally set apart by presbyters, as a presbyter, or minister, (although, already an apostle by the will of Christ,) that, together with Barnabas, he might institute the order of presbyters as the standing min-

1) See in Du Pin, Ecc. Hist. vol. i. p. 6.

istry of the church. That this was the case, would appear from the fact, that Paul generally had two or more ministers in company with him, so that they could at any time act as a presbytery.[1]

But did not, it is asked, the apostles alone, to the exclusion of the elders, ordain the deacons, as recorded in the sixth chapter of Acts? To this we reply, that at this time there had not been any other ministers, or presbyters, set apart, by whom this duty could have been discharged. The apostles then took the first step towards introducing the regular organized form of the government of the church, and the question is, whether in *that established* form there is any recognition of an order of ordainers in distinction from an order of preachers. But, even in thus setting apart the order of deacons, and while thus showing, that in conferring ordination, the people could not, properly, unite, the apostles, nevertheless, acted as presbyters, and not as prelates. For they were all together. They constituted a presbytery. They took common oversight of the church of Jerusalem. And it was as a presbytery they exercised the power of ordination.[2]

§ 2. *The ordinations conferred by Timothy and Titus were presbyterial, nor is there provision made, in the epistles addressed to them, for any other than presbyterial ordination.*

The same conclusion must be drawn, also, from the recorded examples of Timothy and Titus. These individuals were specially deputed by the apostle, to visit the churches, to see that every thing was carried on in an orderly manner, and to ordain presbyters in every city. 'For this cause,' says Paul to Titus, (1: 5,) 'left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (or presbyters) in every city, as I had appointed thee.' So, also, Timothy is enjoined 'to lay hands, suddenly, on no man.' 1 Tim. 5: 22.

It is not to be denied, that Timothy and Titus were deputed by the apostle, on an extraordinary embassy, arising out of the condition and circumstances of the infant church. But they performed this mission in that ministerial character which they already possessed. Titus was left in Crete, just as he was, without any additional consecration; and Timo-

1) See 1 Thess. 1: 1, and 2 Thess. 1: 1; See Pierce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part ii. p. 79.

2) See Boyse's Anct. Episcop. p. 231.

thy was sent to Ephesus with no other ordination, that we know of, than that which he had received from the hands of the presbytery. That they were neither of them prelates, we shall afterwards show, by a refutation of the grounds on which such a pretension has been based. We may, however, be permitted now to state, that they were both regarded, even subsequently to this mission, as evangelists. This must appear evident to any one who will consider that they were both required to be in perpetual motion, and were not permitted to remain fixed in any one place, as we shall have occasion to show.[1] They accompanied the apostles on their journeys, and assisted them by preaching, visiting, and helping to settle officers in the churches,[2] and had equal authority in different churches, as in Corinth and Thessalonica.[3] Timothy, we know, is explicitly denominated an evangelist, (2 Tim. 4: 5,) and Titus may, therefore, *quoad hoc*, receive the same title, as he is characterized by the same duties, (2 Cor. 8: 23.) Such is the opinion of Dr. Willet,[4] and of Stillingfleet,[5] who says, 'and such were Timothy and Titus, notwithstanding all the opposition made against it, as will appear to any one who will take an impartial survey of the arguments on both sides:' of the Jesuit Salmero:[6] of Mr. Jordan:[7] of Mr. Thorndike:[8] and of Saravia, who says, they were 'of the same rank with Mark, who, it is well known, was inferior to Barnabas, being his follower, and as it were, his disciple.[9] But, if Timothy and Titus were evangelists, then they were presbyters, since evangelists were only presbyters, to whom, when they 'had no prospect of returning to any place, the apostles gave a commission to ordain ministers.'[10] They were denominated evangelists, not from their ministerial *order*, but from their ministerial *work*, which is thus described by Eusebius. 'These having merely laid the foundations of the faith, and ORDAINED OTHER PASTORS, (of course, implying that they were themselves of the pastoral or presbyterial order,) committed to them the cultivation of the churches newly planted; while they, themselves, supported by the grace and cooperation of God, proceeded to other

1) See Jus Div. Min. p. 68, 2d part, and Prynne's Unbishoping of Timothy.

2) See Acts, 17: 14, and 19, 22; 1 Thess. 3: 12; 2 Cor. 2: 12; Gal. 2: 1; 2 Cor. 5: 6; 1 Tim. 1: 3; Titus 1: 5.

3) 1 Cor. 4: 17; 1 Thess. 3: 2; 1 Cor. 16: 10; and Peirce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part ii. p. 49.

4) Syn. Pap. p. 236.

5) Iren. p. 368.

6) Disput. i. on Tim. in Plea for Presb. p. 231.

7) Rev. of Trad'n, pp. 80, 81.

8) Prim. Govt. pp. 37 – 39.

9) On Priesthood, p. 80.

10) Archbishop Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 94.

countries and nations. For, even then, many astonishing miracles of the divine Spirit were wrought by them.' [1] The work of an evangelist, as such, was thus altogether extraordinary and temporary; but, in his ordinary character and ministerial standing, he was no more than a pastor, or presbyter. The evangelists were *comites et vicarii apostolorum*, vice-apostles, who, like them, had *curam vicariam omnium ecclesiarum*, the vicarious charge of all the churches; and who, as Ambrose says, did *evangelizare sine cathedra*, that is, preach the gospel without any special charge.[2]

These evangelists, then, were extraordinarily endowed like the apostles, though in an inferior degree, and by the imposition of their hands.[3] They acted 'not as fixed ministers.' [4] 'It must be granted,' says Thorndike, 'that Timothy, as an evangelist, is no governor of churches.' [5] Evangelists, therefore, could not have been prelates, for it is an essential feature in the character of a prelate, that he is set over a church already existing, and requiring an overseer to rule its various elders and deacons; whereas, these evangelists went forth among the heathen to found *infant churches*, and, having ordained pastors over them, to go on to other regions.[6] Such, undoubtedly, was the opinion of Eusebius, and such is the unavoidable dictate of common sense. These evangelists were still subject to the apostles, who retained 'the care of the churches in their own hands.' [7] Of course, they could not be apostles, nor, in any proper sense, successors of the apostles, since they labored with them and under them, and possessed no independent or apostolic power over the churches. They 'came short of the apostles,' says Thorndike,[8] 'and of the measure and kind of those graces of miracles, language, and the like, that make an apostle.' 'These, then,' says Saravia, 'were the evangelists, and inferior to the twelve apostles; being assigned as deputies to commanders-in-chief, to act in their stead, with like authority.'[9]

It is truly pitiful to find christian men, in order to support

1) Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. 37.

2) See Jus. Div. Min. Evang. p. 68, part ii. See the same view of this office given by Saravia on the Priesthood, pp. 65, 67, 77—79, 83, 111; Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 37—40; Essays on the Ch. p. 252; Sinclair's Vind. of the Ap. Succ. Lond. 1839, p. 20; Dr. Pusey's Ch. the Converter of the Heathen, Lond. 1839, Serm. II. p. 8; Bloomfield's N. T. on Eph. 4: 11; Dr. Hammond's Dissert. 3, c. 6.

3) Thorndike, pp. 38, 39.

4) Stillingfleet.

5) Ibid, p. 40.

6) Essays on the Ch. p. 252.

7) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 111.

8) Ibid, p. 39.

9) Ibid, p. 78. The word apostle, in 2 Cor. 8: 23, 24, is used in its general sense of messenger, and does not refer to Titus.

this prelatical hypothesis, warping and twisting scripture, or rather making it. Thus we are gravely told, that in 2 Cor. 8: 23, 24, where the apostle speaks of 'our brethren as *the messengers* of the churches,' he intended to say 'THE APOSTLES,' as if every church had as many apostles as they chose; and that, whereas he speaks of brethren distinct from his 'fellow-helper Titus,' he meant to refer to Luke and Titus, and to make apostles of these two.[1] And yet Saravia refuses to 'reckon Mark and Luke' even 'among the seventy evangelists, because they were called to the ministry by *man*.'[2] Tertullian, too, expressly declares, that LUKE WAS NOT AN APOSTLE, but an apostolic man; not a master, but a disciple, and consequently less than a master.'[3] Papias also makes Mark a follower of Peter only;[4] and it is well known, adds Saravia, that Mark was inferior to Barnabas, being his follower, and, as it were, disciple, and so of the same rank with Titus and Timotheus, that is, simple evangelists.[5] Finally, Saravia enumerates among 'the presbyters whom the apostles and evangelists ordained, John, Mark, Titus, Luke, Timothy, Demas, Silvanus,' who 'were made ministers of the gospel by the hands of the presbytery.'[6] Besides, even were we to rank Timothy and Titus with the apostles, we should do so only because of their extraordinary endowments, and consequent duties. But these were superadded to their ordinary ministerial character, and did not make or constitute them ministers. They characterized them as evangelists. It follows, therefore, that whatever superiority they enjoyed in consequence of these gifts, and this peculiar office, was wholly personal, and not ministerial. It could not be transferred to any who were not in like manner endowed. It could not, therefore, constitute the distinction of a permanent order of ministers in the church, but must have terminated with the cessation of these gifts. And thus we might even suppose, that, as evangelists, Timothy and Titus had a superior power to govern and ordain, and yet that this power, in its ordinary degree, belonged then, as it does now, to all presbyters. The apostles were superior to Timothy and Titus, and gave them only a part of their power and authority; but who will say they were a distinct and superior order? On the contrary, as we have seen, they were, in their ordinary standing, presbyters, and acted as such, and so, therefore, were

1) Oxford Tracts, vol. i. p. 230.
2) On the Priesthood, p. 79.
3) In his 4th Book ag't Marcion, in ib.
4) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. iii.
5) Ibid, pp. 80, 81.
6) Ibid, p. 116.

Timothy and Titus.[1] And, as if to leave no doubt on this matter, we find, that when Timothy is joined with the apostles in any epistle, St. Paul appropriates the title of apostle to himself, and never applies it to him. 'Paul, an *apostle* of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timothy, our *brother!*'[2]

It follows, then, that these evangelists were so called from their personal qualifications and duties, and not from their ministerial order, 'which is as much as to say, in English, that the gift of an evangelist may fall upon any rank of ordinary minister.'[3] It is thus plain, that, in order, they were presbyters. They are so arranged in the apostolic classification, in Eph. 4: 11. Christ, says Paul, gave first apostles; secondly, prophets, (whom we have seen were presbyters,) and evangelists.' But prophets and evangelists are identified by archbishop Potter as one and the same order, differently endowed and employed.[4] Saravia labors to prove that they were of the number of the seventy, who are generally ranked by prelatists in the order of presbyters.[5] 'Evangelists,' says Hooker, 'were presbyters of principal sufficiency,' and only different from other presbyters 'in not being settled in some charge.'[6] Dr. Hammond ranks them below presbyters, and therefore not among prelates.[7] Thorndike asserts, that 'he (Timothy) was ordained deacon by the church at Ephesus, to give attendance on St. Paul in his travels, for which purpose his personal grace of evangelist was opportune.' Such, also, is the opinion of Mr. Sinclair.[8] This, also, was the opinion of Ignatius, who expressly makes Timothy the deacon of Paul, meaning thereby that he was such 'as ministered a pure and blameless ministry.'[9] Some of these opinions, it must be allowed, are very extravagant and groundless, but they very clearly prove that evangelists could not have been prelates, but that they must have been, in general, ministers of the word, or presbyters. At all events, it is demonstrable that they were not *more* than presbyters, nor superior to them in their order and rank as ordinary ministers of Jesus Christ. Pope Pius, it is certain, has expressly reckoned Timothy and Mark with the presbyters educated by the apostles.[10]

1) See Pierce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part ii. p. 28, &c.

2) See 2 Cor. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1.

3) Thorndike, p. 39. See this also argued by the Episcopal author to whom he replies in Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 299.

4) On Ch. Govt. pp. 92–94.

5) On the Priesthood, ch. iv. p. 77, &c.

6) Eccl. Pol. b. v. § 78. vol. iii. pp. 390, 391. Hanbury's ed.

7) Dissert. 3, c. 6, in Baxter on Episc. p. 91.

8) As above, p. 175; On the Apost. Succ. p. 20.

9) Ep. to the Trallians.

10) Biblioth. Patr. tom. iii. p. 15; in Baxter on Episc. p. 105.

Timothy and Titus were thus evangelists, and being, as such, of the ordinary ministerial rank, were presbyters. And thus are they called 'the two presbyters' to whom were given 'the ministerial epistles' in a late prelatical work.[1] And the author of the commentary on 1 Timothy, unequivocally affirms, that Timothy 'was ordained a presbyter, but, inasmuch as he had no other above him, he was a bishop.'[2] Timothy and Titus, then, while presbyters, were explicitly invested with the power of ordination. This power they doubtless exercised not singly, but in association with others, and when acting as members of some local presbytery. Paul himself, so far as we know, never ordained alone, but always in connection with others, and we can hardly think they would transcend the power assumed by the apostle himself. If any affirm that they did ordain singly, let them prove and not merely assert it. They do indeed tell us, that all Paul's directions to them are given to them personally, (*thou, thee*,[3] &c.,) and that they alone acted on them. But this is a weak and foolish plea, since Paul could not instruct them in any other manner, and since the same language applies to the duty of preaching, (2 Tim. 4: 1, 2,) and to other matters, which most certainly were to be attended to by others equally with themselves. This is also a familiar mode of scriptural address. Thus, when Christ delivers to Peter, as one of the whole college of apostles, his solemn charges and glorious promises, he addresses him personally.[4] The plain truth is, that they, acting by the authority of the apostle, were to see that the work was rightly and effectually done; but there is nothing to warrant the conclusion that they alone were to exercise a power and liberty greater than that assumed by the apostle himself. There is enough to show that the contrary was the case. For one part of their charge was, to 'lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins.' Now this language incontrovertibly and necessarily implies, that, in the act of ordination, Timothy should not act alone, but should be assisted by others, for how else could he, in this act, be a 'partaker of *other men's* sins.' It implies further, that these 'other men,' the presbyters associated with Timothy, might in any given case desire the ordination of some unqualified

1) The Churchman's Monthly Rev. Feb. 1841, p. 60. 'No express injunctions are given respecting them (the sacraments) to the two presbyters in the ministerial epistles.'

2) Inter Ambros. Op. tom. ii. App. Col. 295, in Goode's Rule of Faith, ii. p. 87.

3) Oxf. Tracts, vol. i. pp. 230, 163, 159, 160.

4) John, 21: 15; Matt. 21: 19; See Peirce's Presb. Ord. Proved Regular. Lond. 1716, p. 36.

individual, and, in opposition to Timothy's better judgment, insist on introducing him into the ministry. But in such a case, what is Timothy to do? Is he authorized to supersede their rightful authority, or to annul their proceedings, or to set himself up in lordly superiority, as the sole ordainer? By no means. He is to protest against such a proceeding. He is to endeavor to prevent the consummation of their evil purpose. But if they will proceed, he is not to unite in the ordination, and in this way avoid being a 'partaker of other men's sins.' The hypothetical sin, evidently, is the actual ordination of such an unworthy subject, and the avoiding of it by Timothy, is his refusal to coöperate in the transaction. These words plainly confirm our previous conclusions, and prove that Timothy was to act with the other presbyters, not as a prelate, but as a coördinate member of the same presbytery.[1] 'The rule of ordinations is,' says Thorndike, 'here *directed* to Timothy alone; yet we have no cause to believe that it was practised by him otherwise than according to the form aforesaid, joining with him the presbyters in imposition of hands, as was practised by the apostles.... Their course of proceeding must be measured by that which we know otherwise,[2]... that in the primitive times of the church, even under the apostles, matters of censure and ordination both were wont to pass by the presbyters.'[3] And to this very injunction of the apostle, does this prelatic writer trace the canon which requires the association of presbyters, in the imposition of hands, and the ratification of this canon in the ordinal and the canons of the English church.[4] The mention of '*hands*,' here, may also lead to the same view of the passage, for as it has been customary to lay only the right hand upon the head of the consecrated person, especially in the case of the presiding moderator, the plural number may be supposed to indicate the plurality of the officiating ministers.

We have thus argued on the supposition that these words refer to Timothy personally. This, however, may be most safely disputed, and that on the very best grounds. This epistle is not a private epistle to Timothy, but an inspired, canonical epistle, addressed to the whole church in all ages. Its directions were adapted to the condition of that church, as it was designed to be modelled. We must, therefore, look in it for a full view of those orders which were to be instituted

1) See Neander's Hist. of Plant'g of Chr. Rel. vol. ii. p. 181.

2) Prim. Govt. p. 190. See also p. 164.

3) Ibid. p, 188.

4) Concil. Carth. Labbe, tom. ii. p. 1199. Canon 35.

in the churches. Otherwise we must conclude, that this epistle was not canonical, nor a part of the inspired scriptures, which were to continue to be the rule of our faith and practice. But we find no other orders described or enjoined, or in any way provided for in these epistles, except the order of deacons and the order of presbyter-bishops. These words, '*lay hands*, &c.' must thus, after all, be understood to refer to presbyter-bishops, and not to Timothy alone, and to constitute a universal canon, and not merely a special advice. This will be evident by looking at the context, which all relates to these officers, with deacons, and to their qualifications and duties, (see v. 17, and ch. 3 and 5.) And that this is no private interpretation, but an approved prelatical sense of the passage, will appear from the following extract from the decretals of Pope Gregory VII, A. D. 1074. After showing that the apostle includes presbyters under the name of bishop, and, as he thinks, that of bishop under the name of presbyter, he quotes 4 : 14, referring to the presbytery, and then adds, 'to which, in what follows, he immediately says, *lay hands suddenly on no man*, &c., which is properly the duty of bishops, because he calls those bishops whom he had termed THE PRESBYTERY.' He then justifies his opinion by that of Ambrose and Jerome, which he approves as 'faithfully explaining the sentiments of the apostle.'[1] The same thing is also taught by the council Aquisgranense, A. D. 816.[2]

The same thing follows also from other injunctions of the apostle. Thus, in 1 Tim. 5 : 1, Timothy is required 'to rebuke not a presbyter, (πρεσβύτερον,) but to entreat him as a father, . . . . the female presbyters, (πρεσβυτέρας,) as mothers;' and then, it is added, 'honor widows who are widows indeed.' Now why this passage should not be supposed to refer to officers of the church, male and female, younger and older, we cannot imagine. There is to us, confessedly, something ludicrous in the idea of female presbyters, but the question is, what was the state of the case in the apostles' days. Now that there were several presbyters at first in the same church, and that there were female officers of the same name, cannot be denied. 'The feminine πρεσβυτερα or πρεσβυς, *presbytera* or *presbyterissa* is,' says the learned episcopal author of 'Christian Antiquities,' 'of frequent occurrence in the early writers, and denotes either the wife of a presbyter, or a female officer of the church, otherwise called

1) See in Binii Concil. tom. vii. p. 474, c. 15, c. 1, D. E. See also Dr. Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ.

2) See ibid, tom. vi. p. 241.

*widow or deaconess.*'[1] The same thing is testified by Bingham, who gives abundant proof to show that they were indifferently called by all these names, and that they were required to be widows, and even such as had children, by the same laws.'[2] Such also is the view presented by Mr. Coleman,[3] who says, 'the office of deaconess may be regarded as substantially the same with that of *female presbyters.*' But what is more than all this, they are spoken of elsewhere by this same apostle.[4] There can be no doubt, also, that these female helpers were consecrated to their office by prayer and imposition of hands, and that, although not empowered to discharge any of the duties of the ministry, they were in many ways eminently useful in the existing condition of the church.[5] Now here Timothy is reminded, that these presbyters stood on full ministerial equality with himself, and that he is not, therefore, to presume upon his authority, or treat them otherwise than as fathers and mothers in Israel, and the younger ones as brethren and sisters, that is, as coequals.

Again, in 1 Tim. 5: 19, the apostle enjoins upon Timothy 'against a presbyter[6] to receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses,' that is, before as many of the other presbyters as might constitute a presbytery. Timothy is restrained and limited by this express rule, which he is bound to observe. The offending presbyter was to be tried before his peers, and then, and not till then, to be condemned. No accusation was to be received by Timothy, except before such a court, and even when faulty, Timothy was not to rebuke, but to exhort them, as fathers. And, further, if Timothy presided in the court thus called, he was to sit there as being one of the same order with the rest, as has been customary in ecclesiastical bodies in all ages of the church.[7] The apostle here cuts up by the very roots, that prelatic assumption of exclusive

1) Christ. Antiq. p. 236. Concerning their office, see Cotel. ad Constit. Apost. lib. iii. c. g. and Zimmerman de Presbyt. et Presbyterissis. Burnet's Obs. on the Second Canon, p. 68, &c.

2) Eccl. Ant. vol. i. p. 247, &c.

3) Christ. Antiq. pp. 107, 115.

4) Rom. 16: 1.

5) See Coleman, ibid, p. 117, and all of § 12, where their duties are given; Riddle, ibid, p. 252; Bingham, vol. i. p. 251. See also full authorities on the whole subject, presented by bishop Burnet, in his Obs. on the Second Canon, p. 68, &c. See also Whateley's Kingdom of Christ. Essay ii. § 20, p. 131; Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 191. Such female officers, for the benefit of the female portion of the congregation, were approved of by the reformers, and were in use in the Bohemian church, and are still found in the Moravian church. See Bost's Hist. of the Bohem. and Morav. Brethren, p. 131. Taylor's Apostolic Baptism, p. 157, &c.

6) So it is rendered by Bp. Sparrow on the Auth. of the Ch. in Tracts of Anglican Faith, vol. i. p. 333.

7) See Elliott on Romanism, p. 461.

jurisdiction, which is now declared to reside only in the order of prelates, and not at all in that of presbyters. So manifestly is prelacy and the Bible opposite, the one to the other. And thus have we demonstrated, that, as Timothy was presbyterially ordained, so he and Titus were, as evangelists, presbyters; and that in all their ordinations, as it is certain they consecrated only presbyters, they themselves acted only as presbyters, and in association with other presbyters. But were we to admit, that in ordaining ministers they acted, at least, in some extreme cases, alone, this would not affect us, since it would not be deemed improper, even now, for some modern presbytery, in any case of absolute necessity, to depute one of their number to ordain ministers in some heathen or destitute settlements.[1] But this manifestly would not prove, what prelatists affirm, that the apostles, with these associates, instituted an order of prelates, who had power in other churches besides their own; and that to these was given not only the power of ordination, but also the power of imparting to others the same authority, and of limiting it to them. This, as Mr. Goode allows, prelatists are bound to prove, and this, he adds, 'will be a hard task.'[2]

But, it may be said, if presbyters were thus originally empowered to ordain and govern, — what need was there to send to them, and to their churches, Timothy and Titus, with such extraordinary directions? We answer, that all the directions and charges contained in these epistles were proper, advisable, and necessary for the better instruction of presbyters, and churches, in our own day, as well as at that time. They are, as it regards all times, the dictates of inspiration, and designed to be an authoritative rule of faith and practice. In the case of these churches, however, since they were as yet imperfectly organized, more than mere instruction was necessary; and, therefore, these evangelists were sent to them by the apostles, with powers suited to the exigency of the occasion, and authority to see these directions carried into full operation. The epistles themselves, however, were designed by God for the churches, and not for Timothy or Titus. The directions, duties, and functions, here described, were given for their *and our* instruction. All the ministerial acts here

1) Hence it has been argued, that the order of evangelists were designed to be as permanent as the unevangelized condition of any portion of our globe. See Essay on the Nature and Perpetuity of the Office of the Primitive Evangelist, by Rev. David Douglass, Baptist, p. 210.

2) Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 79. Eng. ed. See also Pierce's Def. of Pres. Ord. part. ii. pp. 25, 28.

enjoined, are to be performed by the ministers here described. And as it is granted, that we have here no account of any other ministers than presbyters, presbyters are here, to the end of time, empowered to ordain other ministers by the laying on of their hands.[1]

§ 3. *Conclusion of the scripture argument for the power of presbyters to ordain. No evidence to be found for prelatical ordination.*

We have thus, we trust, satisfactorily proved, by plain and positive testimony from scripture, that presbyters did, and, therefore, can still ordain other ministers. On the other hand, while we have found abundant instances in which ordinations were performed by presbyters, and by the apostles, in their character of presbyters, we do not find in scripture any instances of ordination, by a single individual, nor by any number of individuals, under the assumed character of prelates. There is no such instance to be produced from the whole New Testament. Neither do we read of any one case where those who were first ordained as presbyters, were afterwards consecrated as prelates; nor any reiteration of christian ordination under any circumstances whatever, and yet the book of Acts embraces the history of the church for thirty years. We know that there was no ordination in the Jewish church after the first; and, as this custom of ordination was derived from it, we must presume the order of the synagogue was followed.[2] The contrary, we have certainly no right to assume, against fact, utility, and Jewish example.[3] On this point, let us refer to the testimony of bishop Croft.[4] The whole theory of prelatic ordination is an idle hypothesis, without any manner of support in the word of God. It is not only not true that prelates alone are authorized to ordain; it is not true that the Bible knows any thing of prelates, or allows to them either the power of ordination or of any thing else. The only permanent order of ministers known to the scriptures, is that of presbyters or bishops, and the only ordination it prescribes is presbyterian ordination. Presbyters, therefore, have the power of ordination.

1) Milton's Wks. vol. i. pp. 86, 87.
2) See Bp. Beveridge, Wks. vol. ii. p. 111.
3) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 274.
4) Naked Truth, or the True State of the Primit. Ch. in Scott's Coll. of Tracts, vol. vii. p. 297.

# CHAPTER X.

## THAT PRESBYTERS HAVE THE POWER OF ORDINATION, PROVED BY AN APPEAL TO ANTIQUITY.

### § 1. *Presbyterian ordination attested by facts and testimonies, from the earliest ages.*

Before leaving this subject of ordination, we will produce some testimonies in support of our conclusion. And to put the matter beyond controversy, we affirm, to use the words of Dr. Rice, that there was no ordination performed at all, from the days of the apostles, until at least two hundred and fifty years after Christ, by any but presbyters. During the first two centuries, the modern distinction between bishop and presbyter was unknown to the church.[1] The exclusive power of ordination, claimed by prelates, is an usurpation, supported by nothing but decrees of councils, and contrary to the whole practice of the pure, primitive age of christianity. When presidents were chosen, or succeeded to others, they were not reordained, in the first two centuries.[2] As late as the council of Nice, in A. D. 325, this practice of at once passing into the office of bishop is forbidden, thus showing that at that time the ordination of a bishop was sometimes the first and only ordination. Ambrose, of Milan, Nectarius, of Constantinople, Eusebius, the successor of Basil, Eucherius, bishop of Lyons, Cyprian, of Carthage, and Philogonius, of Antioch, are all thought to have been laymen, when ordained to be bishops. Many others passed from the order of deacon to that of bishop; thus proving, that there were then only ordinations for two orders.[3] According to Hippolytus, and the apostolical constitutions, the presidents or

1) Evang. Mag. vol. ix. p. 618.
2) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 135.
3) Dr. Wilson, ibid, p. 231.

bishops, were set apart to their office, not by imposition of hands, but by the simple form of 'holding the divine gospels opened over the head of him who was ordained,' while presbyters were consecrated to their office by imposition of hands. Nor is there any proof that the elevation of a presbyter to the duty of president or prelate, was considered as an ordination, or attended by imposition of hands, before the middle of the third century.[1] 'As for the consecration of bishops, by a new imposition of hands, it doth not,' says bishop Burnet, 'prove them a distinct office; being only a solemn benediction, and separation of them, for the discharge of that inspection committed to them.'[2] Hilary, as the same bishop acknowledges, was of opinion *that* the *elder presbyter* without any election *or ordination*, succeeded to the chair of the deceased bishop.[3] Dionysius, the Areopagite, also tells us that the presbyter was ordained in the same form that a bishop was ordained, save only, that the gospel was not laid on his head.[4]

In the epistle to Hiero, ascribed to Ignatius, speaking of his presbyters, he says, 'they baptize, they celebrate the eucharist, they impose hands in penance, they ordain.'[5] Equally plain is the declaration of Firmilian, himself a bishop, in a letter to Cyprian. 'The presbyters preside, who possess the power of baptizing, imposing the hands, and ordaining.'[6] Hilary, the deacon, says, that 'in Egypt, even to this day, the presbyters ordain in the bishop's absence,' and that 'the ordination of bishop and presbyter is the same, for both are priests.'[7] The general synod of Nice, in their epistle to the churches of Alexandria, &c., authorized the clergy, ordained by Meletius, to ordain ministers, and to nominate men for the sacred office.[8] And that those, here referred to, were presbyters and not prelates, appears from their character, 'such as were entered into holy orders;' from their having been ordained by Meletius alone; from their having been deprived of the privileges of presbyters; and because they are prohibited from preaching in any church, without the consent of the bishop. And 'as for those,' says

1) See ibid, pp. 226, 227, and 229, 230, 231, 273, 135, 148, and Nolan's Cath. Char. p. 18.

2) Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. Conf. iv. p. 181, ed. 2d. 1724.

3) Obs. on the 1st Canon, p. 6.

4) Burnet's Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 65.

5) Cap. iii. p. 114, ed. Cotel. in Thorndike, pp. 163, 164.

6) Cyprian, Ep. 75.

7) On Ephes. 4: 2, and 1 Tim. 3.

8) Socrates, Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 9, and quoted in Baxter on Episc. part ii. pp. 104, 105, 'auctoritatem habeant tum ministros ordinandi, tum eos qui clero digni fuerint nominandi,' &c.

the council, 'who have been found in no schism, but have ever remained immaculate in the catholic church, it pleased the holy synod that they should have power to ordain.'[1] The presbyters, therefore, of the church of Alexandria, and the other churches of Egypt, were still allowed, in the fourth century, their full power of ordination: and this power, the council goes on to say, is 'according to the ecclesiastical law of sanction.'[2]

Paphnutius, who was only a presbyter, ordained his disciple Daniel, first a deacon, and afterwards a presbyter.[3] The chorepiscopi, or country bishops, ordained both presbyters and deacons.[4] In the fourth century, when the prelatical hierarchy had attained to some maturity, these rural bishops, or chorepiscopi, as well as presbyters generally, were forbidden to ordain.[5] If, then, these chorepiscopi were prelates before this time, it follows that only some prelates can ordain, that is, those only who are permitted by their masters. And if they were not prelates, but only presbyters, then presbyters were at liberty to ordain, until the church was enslaved by spiritual despotism. But that the chorepiscopi were as truly bishops as any others, while yet they were only parochial ministers, is made manifest from this fact, that there were also, in ancient times, *rural presbyters*, (*επιχωριοι πρεσβυτεροι or regionarii*) who were regarded as inferior to the city presbyters. But were they, therefore, of an inferior *order* to the city presbyters? Surely not, and for the same reason, *rural bishops* (*επιχωριοι επισκοποι*) were not an *order* inferior to city bishops.[6] This will appear still further, from 'The Reduction of Episcopacy unto the Form of Synodial or Presbyterial Government,' by archbishop Usher, wherein he allows that the suffragans 'supplying the place of those, who, in the ancient church were called chorepiscopi,' 'may lawfully use the power both of jurisdiction and ordination, according to the word of God, and the practice of the ancient church.'[7]

1) Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 9.

2) See Powell on the Apost. Succ. ed. 2nd. pp. 128, 129, and p. 311. That the word *προχειριζομαι* here refers to ordination, is manifest from its being so used in the very passage in reference to the bishop of Alexandria. See ibid.

3) Cassian, Collat. iv. c. 1.

4) See full on in Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hier. p. 211, &c. Baxter on Episc. part ii. pp. 62, 63. Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, p. 497.

5) Bingham Orig. Eccl. B. ii. ch. xiv. § 2. See council of Ancyra, Can. 13, in Binii Conc. tom. i. pp. 277, 278, and our remarks.

6) See Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 235; also at p. 173, where he shows they ordained; and Burnet Obs. on 1st Canon, p. 48, Suppl.

7) Judgment of the archbishop of Armagh, by Dr. Bernard, Lond. 1657, pp. 8 and 12, of the Reduction, &c. at the end.

Usher did not lightly appeal to the ancient church. By the council of Antioch, the chorepiscopi were allowed to govern their own churches, to ordain readers, subdeacons, exorcists, and even deacons and presbyters, with the permission of the city bishop.[1] By the 13th canon of the council of Ancyra, they were confirmed in the same privileges.[2] Basil, the Great, in an epistle to his chorepiscopi, confirms to them the full power they then had, of creating both presbyters and deacons.[3] The same conclusion must be drawn from the 8th canon of the council of Nice. Nicolas I, Pope, A. D. 864, being consulted on this very point, decided, that whereas in many regions these chorepiscopi ordained deacons and presbyters, and some bishops lately had deposed those so ordained, such reordinations ought not to be allowed, since no one could question that, like the seventy, they were true bishops.[5] Rabanus Maurus, in an epistle concerning them, traces chorepiscopi to the time of Peter and Clemens, and says that they ever had full right to ordain all the orders, and discharge every episcopal function. He wonders greatly at the contention on this point, which he does not hesitate to ascribe to pride and envy.[6] The character of these chorepiscopi appears further from the fact, that they are never ranked among presbyters, but as a distinct class between bishops and presbyters. And while, by law, they were abolished as an order in the ninth century, yet, as Natalus Alexander proves, they still continued to retain their place, and to be pepetuated.[8]

But if, as many papists and prelatists would now teach, these rural bishops were presbyters, then of course all the evidence for their original power of ordination, is proof for the original and inherent power of presbyters to ordain, and for the subsequent withdrawment of that power by hierarchical usurpation. Now that, in the judgment of many, they were only presbyters, is certain. 'The chorepiscopi,' says Leo, 'according to the canons of Neo Cæsarea, or according

1) See Dissert. De Chorepiscopi, Natali Alexandro, Paris, 1678, p. 173.
2) Ep. 181, in ibid, p. 174.
3) Ibid, p. 176.
4) See ibid, p. 181.
5) Ad Drogonem Metensim Episc. ibid, p. 183.
6) Ibid, p. 185, Concil. Chalced. Can. 12.
7) Ibid, pp. 187, 188.
8) That they could originally ordain. is acknowledged by Jeremy Taylor, in his Episc. Asserted in Wks. vol. vii. p. 128. So also Dr. Forbes in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 135, where see also the opinion of Hispalensis, who lived A. D. 630, in libro. de Off. Eccl. c. 6, who says they yet remained in the church. Dr. Field of the Ch. lib. iii. c. 39. Forbeis Irenicum, cap. 11. Tertium Partem. Thomœ disp. 238, c. 7.

to the decrees of other fathers, are the same as presbyters.'[1] So speak Isodore Hispalensis, and Damasus,[2] and the council of Hispalensis. Dr. Field also affirms, that chorepiscopi 'do daily in the Romish church, confirm and give orders,'[3] and that these 'chorepiscopi suffragans, as they call them, being not bishops, but only presbyters, do daily, with good allowance, ordain presbyters, and all other episcopal acts.'[4] And Natalus Alexander, with the sanction of the whole faculty of the University of Paris, has published an elaborate dissertation, to prove that the chorepiscopi were only presbyters, for which he produces a host of authorities.[5] The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, that originally bishops and presbyters were the same, and that presbyters were deprived of this power of ordination by ecclesiastical tyranny. 'Hence it came to pass,' says Moshiem, 'that at the conclusion of this, the fourth century, there remained no more than a mere shadow of the ancient government of the church. Many of the privileges, which had formerly belonged to the presbyters and people, were usurped by the bishops.'[6]

Neither was that usurpation unresisted. Many were still disposed to assert their rights, and it required all that large ecclesiastical assemblies could do, to reduce the resisting presbyters to obedience.[7] These dissentients — or rather these true christian patriots — found a voice in Aerius, who boldly proclaimed the defection of the church, and the true original identity of bishops and presbyters. With him agreed Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose, as we shall afterwards see, and many others in subsequent ages.[8] To this agree the words of Mr. Thorndike, who says, 'Now of all the parts of the office, common to bishops and presbyters, this of ordination is the first, the bishop began to exercise alone, so that with St. Chrysostom, and St. Jerome, it is taken in a manner for granted, that it was to be done by him alone.'[9] Equally candid, is bishop Burnet, in alluding to the same early and undeniable encroachment. Speaking of the fact, that 'no ordination of presbyters might be gone through, without the presence and concurrence of the bishop,' he says, this 'was judged necessary, (as I suppose,) more upon the account of unity and order, than from the nature of the thing itself; for

1) Ep. 88, in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 137.
2) In ibid.
3) Can. 7, in ibid.
4) Of the Ch. lib. iii. c. 38.
5) Dissert. Eccl. Trias Paris, 1678, pp. 166–188.
6) Eccl. Hist. Cent. iv. part ii. ch. ii.
7) See Plea for Presbytery, p. 40. and Boyd on Episc. p. 46.
8) See Stillingfleet, Irenic. part ii. ch. vi.
9) Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 158.

taking things in themselves it will follow, that whatever power one hath he may transmit to another; and, therefore, there seems to be small reason why one who hath the power of preaching the gospel, and administering sacraments, may not also transmit the same to others; and it seems unreasonable so to appropriate this to a bishop, as to annul those ordinations which were managed by presbyters, when bishops could not be had.'[1]

Nor does our conclusion less certainly follow from the 13th canon of the council of Ancyra. 'It is not allowed to village bishops to ordain presbyters or deacons; nor is it allowed even to city presbyters to do this in another diocese, without the license of the bishop.' From this canon it would appear, that it was then (A. D. 358,) lawful for presbyters of the city to ordain, without the bishop's presence, if they had his warrant in writing. It also appears, that before that time they could ordain without the bishop's warrant, to which they were limited by this canon.[2] Further, it would appear that city presbyters are here preferred to country bishops, and that while the power of ordination was, at this time, taken from the latter, its exercise was still allowed to the former, as an inherent right, and is only limited by certain restrictions. And, as many of the most learned prelatists allow that these country bishops had, by divine right, the power of ordination, much more must they allow that this power belongs, by divine right, to presbyters. According, however, to the translation of bishop Jeremy Taylor, this canon recognises the inherent power of ordination as belonging equally to both the country bishops and the city presbyters. 'Rural bishops shall not ordain presbyters or deacons in another diocese, without letters of license from a bishop. Neither shall priests of the city attempt it.'[3] Either way, it fully proves our position. The same thing follows, also, from the very similar canon of the council of Antioch, A. D., 341, canon 10th. By this canon, rural bishops are allowed 'to ordain readers, subdeacons, and exorcists;' but not the higher orders, 'without the knowledge of the bishop of that city or church in which he, or the diocese (regio) over which he presides, is

1) Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 55.

2) See in Binii Concil. tom. i. pp. 277, 278. There is a different reading of this Canon, by which its natural meaning is attempted to be set aside. But the reading which gives our sense is followed by Binius, Gentianus, Hervetus, the Arabic manuscript, Zonaras on this Canon, Aristenus, Wallo Messalinus, and Blondel. See Burnet's Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 55.

3) See Episc. Ass. ch. vi. vol. vii. of Wks. pp. 128, 129, and Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 127, 128.

found.'[1] 'Surely,' says Dr. Forbes, the episcopal professor, in Aberdeen, 'the church would not have granted this power to the chorepiscopi, unless it had judged that ordination to be valid which is performed by presbyters alone.'[2]

Jerome, in his commentary on the third chapter of Zephaniah, very plainly attributes to presbyters their original right of ordination. 'Priests,' says he, 'who baptize and administer the eucharist, anoint with oil, impose hands, instruct catechumens, constitute levites and other priests, have less reason to take offence at us for explaining these things . . . . than to ask of the Lord forgiveness.'[3]

The ancient practice of the church is attested, also, by the facts connected with the case of Ischryas. He was ordained by Colluthus, who was a presbyter, and had lapsed into heresy and raised a distinct sect. Ischryas was, therefore, beyond doubt irregularly ordained. Accordingly, when the case was brought before the provincial synod of Alexandria, Colluthus was reprimanded for ordaining irregularly. But he was not deposed; and while those ordinations which he performed during his schism were annulled, nothing was alleged against those performed, either before or subsequent to that event. Indeed, as Du Pin informs us, this Colluthus 'dwelt at Mareotis, a country of Egypt, where there was neither bishop nor suffragan, but only a great many parishes governed by priests.'[4] It is, therefore, manifest, as Stillingfleet admits, that all restraints upon the ordaining power of presbyters arose from ecclesiastical law, and not from any divine institution. As late as A. D. 398, in a council of Carthage, it was enacted, that in every ordination of presbyters, 'all the presbyters present should hold their hands upon the head of him who was ordained, near to the hand of the bishop.'[5] Nay, at the ordination of Pelagius, bishop of Rome, although, by the fourth canon of the council of Nice, and other councils,[6] three bishops were required for the ordination of a bishop, there were only two bishops, and one presbyter. This was as late as A. D. 558. Either, therefore,

1) Held under pope Julius I. See Binii Concil. tom. i. p. 508, and Hispa. on it, in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 135.

2) In ibid, p. 135.

3) Tom. v. p. 218, in Dr. Wilson, p. 148.

4) See Du Pin's Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 170. Stillingfleet, Irenic. part ii. ch. 7, p. 381. Blondel's Apology. Plea for Presbytery, p. 42. Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 236.

5) Binii Concilia, vol. i. p. 553. So also in the council of Aken. A. D. 400, and Cyprian Ep. 6 and 58. Ambrose Ep. B. 10. See Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 235, for an answer to objections.

6) See Conc. Arel. 1, Canon 21, Arel. 2, Canon 5. Carth. 2, Canon 12. Gratian Dist. 64. Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, p. 18.

this presbyter Andrew, had the power of ordaining, when allowed to do so, or else Pelagius was not validly ordained, and the boasted prelatical succession is broken. The church certainly did not then believe, that the two bishops alone could transmit the succession, else they would not have employed the presbyter Andrew. They did believe, that he could ordain as effectually as the two bishops, when appointed to the duty, otherwise they never would have enacted such a farcical mockery, for which there was no necessity, and which was of no manner of use. Neither was this case singular, since the instances of ordinations of bishops by single persons are numerous, as may be seen in Burnet.[1] And thus it is demonstrable, that in the judgment of the church, as late as the sixth century, presbyters were believed to be inherently capable of ordaining even bishops, and of transmitting the entire plenitude of episcopal grace.[2] And this the church of Rome, the *infallible* source of all prelatical custom and law, still believes, since she is still in the practice of authorizing presbyters to assist at the ordination of bishops;[3] and hence the whole chain of the Irish and American Romish succession depends upon the fact, that presbyters are as fully capable as prelates of ordaining others.[4] For since it is a received maxim, that *episcopus potest delegare ea quæ sunt jurisdictionis, non ea quæ sunt ordinis*, 'a bishop can delegate those duties which appertain to jurisdiction, but not those connected with ordination,'[5] the power of imparting ordination must be believed to reside inherently in presbyters, otherwise they never could receive it at all. Some of the schoolmen, therefore, dared to affirm, that neither bishop nor pope could license priests to give ordination, unless the power of ordination be *de jure* in presbyters, even as they could not allow one to consecrate, who was not in orders, and thus able to officiate.[6] We must, therefore, conclude with Dr. Forbes, that 'the ordination which is by presbyters alone, is not, by divine right, invalid; neither is ordination so proper by divine right to a bishop, that it may not be

1) Obs. on the first Canon, pp. 18, 19.

2) See this case very fully and ably argued by Faber in his Vallenses, and Albigenses, p. 553, &c.

3) Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, p. 18.

4) See the proof fully given by Mr. Palmer, in his Episc. Vindic. against Dr. Wiseman, ch. xviii. Lond. 1840.

5) See lord Brooke on Episc. p. 74.

6) In jure divino non protest papa dispensare. Bellarm, lib. ii. de concil, c. 18, and lib. de Matrim, c. 11. See Aureolus, to the same effect, in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 142.

done, even in the opinion of papists themselves, by presbyters alone.'[1]

The churches in Egypt and in Africa, held, as we have seen, to presbyterial ordination. This is further evident from the case of the church of Alexandria. After the time of Heraclas and Dionysius, A. D. 231, the bishops or presidents of this church appear to have been prelatically ordained.[2] But, however this be, previous to that time, even from the days of Mark, the presbyters elected one of their own number, and set him apart as their president. This fact, which certifies the custom of one of the most prominent churches during the three first centuries, we will have occasion fully to substantiate.[3]

According to Philostorgius, the Gothic churches were planted and governed by presbyters only, for seventy years.[4] The same was the case with the churches of Scotland, and of England, under the government of the Culdees, who were only presbyters, for hundreds of years, as we shall fully show.[5] Such also was the order of the churches in Gaul, as Stillingfleet thinks.[6] The Abyssinians had only one president for their whole country.[7] The Scythians had no more.[8] Balsamon tells us of some churches in the east, for whom it was thought neither safe nor expedient to have bishops.[9] According to Eusebius, Fabianus was at once placed upon the episcopal throne in the church of Rome, by the church, without any episcopal consecration.[10] The church of Rome also, during many long periods when there was no bishop, was governed, and every function discharged by the presbyters.[11] This was the case also with the church at Carthage, and with the churches of the east.[12]

Leo, the Great, A. D. 400, being consulted concerning some who had been ordained presbyters and deacons, and who claimed to be bishops, and actually ordained others,

1) Irenic. in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 142.

2) Eutychius of Alexandria, however, says, the original custom continued until the time of Alexander, who was one of the bishops present at the Council of Nice.

3) See B. iii. ch. ii. § 3. See also Goode's Div. Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. pp. 80–85, Eng. ed. Baxter's Episc. part ii. p. 223, 224, &c. Bp. Burnet in his Obs. on the first Canon p. 8.

4) See Blondel's Apol. Stillingfleet, Irenic, p. 375, and Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, p. 33.

5 See Stillingfleet, ibid, p. 374. Baxter, ibid, p. 224. &c. Plea for Presbytery, pp. 51–57, and 279.

6) Ibid.

7) Ibid.

8) Ibid.

9) Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon p. 32.

10) Eccl. Hist. vi. 29, Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 85, Note

11) Stillingfleet, ibid, p. 376 and Burnet, ibid.

12) See Stillingfleet, Irenic, p. 376.

decided that they ought not to be considered as bishops, but that 'if any had been ordained clergy by these pseudo-bishops, in those churches over which there were bishops, if their ordination was done with the knowledge and consent of these bishops, it ought to be held valid, so as that they might continue in their churches.'[1]

As late as the time of Gregory, bishop of Rome, presbyters, at certain times and in some places, 'did impose hands and confirm those that were baptized.' And when this pope wholly forbade their doing so in future, there was so great exception taken to his conduct, that he again restored to them their privilege.[2] But still further. In the first council of Aquisgranense, held A. D. 816, under pope Stephen V, c. 8, it is said, 'and only on account of authority, (*solum propter auctoritatem*,) has the ordination and consecration of the clergy to the chief priesthood (*summo sacerdoti*) been reserved, lest the discipline of the church, being committed to many, concord should be destroyed and scandals produced.'[3] Thus manifestly showing, that even then, ordination to inferior offices was still permitted to presbyters, and that all other ordinations were withheld only by ecclesiastical custom

The power of confirmation also, which is regarded by prelatists, as analagous to that of ordination, is in the Greek church allowed to presbyters; was administered by presbyters in Alexandria, and throughout the whole of Egypt; and in many cases also in the western church.[4]

It thus appears, that while not one good proof can be brought from the primitive church, against ordination by presbyters, or for the sole ordination of prelates, or for any other ordination, than that of parochial bishops; there is not a little positive evidence in favor of presbyterial ordination.[5]

## § 2. *Presbyterian ordination confirmed by the judgment of the Schoolmen.*

Among the Schoolmen it was a received opinion, that orders conferred, even by presbyters, could never be annulled. Many of them proved, that presbyters could ordain as well as bishops, since, as they taught, presbyters could

1) Epist. 91, cited by Gratian. See quoted in full in Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 225.

2) Field on the Ch. B. iii. c. 39, pp. 155, 158.

3) See Binii Concilia. tom. vi. p. 241, c. 2, A. B.

4) See Hilary on Ephes. 4, and lib. quæst. in Vat. et Nov. Test. attributed to Augustine, q. 101, and Burnet on the first Canon, pp. 41–43.

5) See lord Brooke on Episc. p. 73. See also Dr. Rice, in the Evang. Mag. vol. x. pp. 613–633.

consecrate, which is the greater function, and, therefore, could ordain, which is the less. They believed, that every presbyter has the *actum primum*, the inward power to ordain, and that, though his power was restrained by the canons, it was not extinguished.

Bishop Davenant quotes the principal of the schoolmen, as being of the opinion, 'that there is not a different power of order in bishops, besides what is in presbyters, but only a greater degree.'[1] The same thing is also done at length by archdeacon Mason.[2] Panormitanus says, 'formerly presbyters governed the church in common, and ordained priests, and alike administered all the sacraments.'[3] Aureolus has this notable passage.[4] 'Every form, inasmuch as it is an act, hath power to communicate itself in the same kind; therefore, every priest hath power to celebrate orders. Why then do they not celebrate them? Because their power is hindered by the decree of the church. Whereupon, when a bishop is made, there is not given unto him any new power, but the former power, being hindered, is set at liberty; as a man, when the act of reason is hindered, and the impediment is removed, there is not given unto him a new soul.' Ambrosiaster declares, that 'the ordination of a bishop and a presbyter is the same,' and, that 'in Egypt, a presbyter ordains when a bishop is not present.'[5]

Armachanus, a very learned and worthy bishop, and many learned men, in his time, were of opinion, that in some cases and at some times, presbyters may give orders — and, therefore, that their power was inherent, and only restrained by custom.[6] Armachanus said, 'that if all bishops were dead, inferior priests could still ordain.'[7] Durandus, in the thirteenth century, says, 'touching the power of consecration or order, it is much doubted, among divines, whether any be greater therein than an ordinary presbyter: for, Hierome seemeth to have been of opinion, that the highest power of consecration or order, is the power of a priest or elder, so that every priest, in respect of his priestly power, may

1) Determinations, p. 42, in Bernard's Judgment of archbishop Usher, p. 130.

2) See in ibid, pp. 133, 134.

3) Lib. i. Decretal. de Consuet. cap. 4, Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 129.

4) Lib. iv. d. 24, art. 2, in ibid, p. 133. See also similar quotations from Rosellus, Panormitanus, the author of the Gloss, Gregory's Decretals, in ibid, pp. 139, 140, and Forbes, in Irenicum, c. 11.

5) See in Elliott on Romanism, vol. i. p. 472, from his Comment. on 1 Tim. 3.

6) Field on the Ch. B. iii. c. 39, and Bernard's Judgment, &c., p. 132.

7) Davenant on Col. vol. i. p. 59.

minister all sacraments . . . give all orders,'[1] &c. 'All,' says dean Field, 'that may be alleged, out of the fathers, for proof of the contrary, may be reduced to two heads. For, first, whereas when they make all such ordinations void, as are made by presbyters, it is to be understood according to the strictness of the canons in use in their time, and not absolutely in the nature of the thing; which appears, in that they make all ordinations, *sine titulo*, void; all ordinations of bishops, ordained by fewer than three bishops, with the metropolitan, &c. Secondly, they are to be understood regularly, that is, as referring to what was considered to be regular ordinations, and not as to what were valid.'[2] Neither is there any difficulty in harmonizing this view of the opinions of the *later* fathers, with the fact, that they did regard the *office* of bishop as higher in dignity, and greater in jurisdiction, than that of the presbyterhood. They might still believe, that presbyters could, by inherent power, ordain either to their own office, or to that of the episcopate. For, in like manner, were archbishops consecrated by bishops, and patriarchs by archbishops, and the pope himself, by his cardinals. In civil society also kings, and all others in authority, are introduced to their office by those over whom, by virtue of their office, they will exercise jurisdiction.[3]

The power of order, says Carletan, by all writers, that I could see, even of the church of Rome, is understood to be immediately from Christ, given to all bishops and priests alike, by their consecration, wherein the pope has no privilege above others. Thus teaches Bonaventure, Augusti, Gerson, Causabon, cardinal Contarenus, and Bellarmine.[4]

### § 3. *Presbyterian ordination confirmed by the judgment of prelatists themselves.*

That this was the opinion of the English reformers, we have already seen, and it cannot be questioned.[5] And, had we space, we could show, in addition to the numerous proofs

1) In 4 Sent. Dist. 24, q. 5, quoted in ibid, B. v. c. 27.

2) Ibid, B. iii. c. 39.

3) See Baynes's Diocesan's Tryall, p. 47, and Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 222, 223, 226, Eng. ed. Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 78, 79.

4) Carlet. on Jurisd. p. 7. Bonavent. in 4 Sent. d. 17, q. 1. August. Triumph. li. de potest. Eccl. q. 1, a. 1. Gerson li. de. pot. Eccl. Consid. 1. Causab. de. Conced. Cath. 2. cap. 13. Contaren. Tr. de. Eccl. potest. Pontiff. Bellarum, lib. iv. de. Rom. Pontiff. cap. 2. See many others quoted in Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 232, and part i. p. 75.

5) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. 18. Goode's Div. Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. p. 91, &c. Keble's Hooker Pref. p. 59 – 62. Jewell Def. of Apol. part ii. c. 5, div. 1. See also Plea for Presb. pp. 102 – 106.

already adduced, that such also has been the opinion of the best and greatest divines of the English church.[1] 'Wherefore,' says archdeacon Mason, with the approbation of bishop Overal, 'seeing a presbyter is equal to a bishop in the power of order, he hath equally intrinsical power to give orders. . . . . Wherefore, seeing a bishop and presbyter do not differ in order, but only in præeminence and dignity, as you yourselves acknowledge, and seeing Calvin and Beza had the order of priesthood, which is the highest in the church of God, and were lawfully chosen, the one after the other, to a place of eminency, and indued with jurisdiction, derived unto them from the whole church wherein they lived, you cannot, with reason, deny them the substance of the episcopal office.'

'I have ever declared my opinion to be,' says archbishop Usher, 'that *episcopus et presbyter gradu tantum differunt non ordine*, and, consequently, that in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by presbyters standeth valid.' and 'I do profess, that with like affection, I should receive the blessed sacrament at the hands of the Dutch ministers, if I were in Holland, as I should do at the hands of the French ministers, if I were at Charenton.'[2] He also affirms, that if, in any case, bishops were heretical, and refuse to ordain orthodox ministers, the orthodox presbyters would be forced to ordain other presbyters, and that he would not pronounce their ordinations invalid or vain.[3] Of this, we have a very striking proof in the case of Whittingham, dean of Durham. Sandys, archbishop of York, a second Laud, in 1577, required Whittingham, who had been called into the ministry at Frankfort, to give proof of his ordination, according to the legal form. The dean, denying his right, Sandys applied for a royal commission to investigate the point in dispute. These were himself, Hutton, and the earl of Huntingdon. The other two commissioners both declared themselves ready to recognise the ordination, dean Hutton declaring, that 'his brother of Durham, had been ordained in better sort, than

1) Vindiciæ, pp. 160, 161, and 173–176. See a Catena of these divines, in Goode's Divine Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. ii. ch. viii. pp. 72–132, Eng. ed. See numerous testimonies in Baxter on Episcopacy, part ii. p. 114. Also, in Pierce's Def. of Presb. Ordin. part ii. p. 96, &c. Powell on the Apost. Succ. p. 76. The Testim. of bishop Forbes in Baxter, part i. p. 71, and of Grotius, ibid, p. 73, and of bishop Downame, ibid, p. 52, and of Usher in the Judgment of, by Bernard, appendix, p. 6. See also Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 20, 21. Bishop Carleton in Baxter, p. 223.

2) The Judgment of the late archbishop of Armagh, &c., by Dr. Bernard. Lond. 1657. pp. 125–127.

3) See ibid, p. 131.

Sandys himself, and than most of the ministers of England.' While the earl wrote to the lord treasurer, that 'it could not but be ill taken of all the godly learned, both at home and in all the reformed churches abroad, that we should allow the popish-massing priests in our ministry, and disallow of the ministers made in a reformed church.' The result was, that Sandys was forced to make an apology to the lord treasurer, and to declare, that he did not mean to 'discredit the church of Geneva,' or question the validity of ordination conferred by presbyters. And had not Whittingham suddenly died, 'there is every probability, that the case would have been decided in his favor.'[1]

And that such was the judgment of the church, in 1609, is evident from the fact, that the individuals then consecrated bishops for Scotland, although the question was raised, were not reordained, though they had received nothing but presbyterian ordination. They were thus English prelates, while, as to orders, they were nothing more than Scottish presbyters.[2] 'Presbyters,' says Dr. Forbes, of Aberdeen, a great stickler for prelacy, 'have, by divine right, the power of ordaining as well as of preaching and baptizing.'[3]

'No bishop in Scotland,' says bishop Burnet, 'during my stay in that kingdom, (that is, from 1643 to 1688, a period of forty-five years,) ever did so much as desire any of the presbyters who went over from the church of Scotland, to be reordained.'[4] 'The archdean of St. Andrews,' says the late prelate Walker, 'whose name was Waddel, was a presbyterian minister before the reformation . . . but would not submit to be episcopally ordained . . . . . his scruples, and the scruples of many in similar circumstances, were respected, and his clerical character recognised without the episcopal ordination.'[5]

Bishop Cosins testifies to the same thing. 'If at any time,' says he, 'a minister so ordained in these French churches, came to incorporate himself with ours, and to receive public charge, . . . as I have known some of them to have done of late, (the end of the seventeenth century,) and

1) See Dr. Taylor's (of Dublin University) Biogr. of the Age of Elizabeth, vol. ii. pp. 71, 73, 74.

2) See in ibid, p. 135. Bancroft, on this occasion, justified his opinion by examples from antiquity, and all acquiesced in his opinion. Courayer's Def. of Eng. Ordin. p. 22. Heylin's Hist. of Presb. p. 327. Collier's Ch. Hist. tom. ii. p. 702.

3) Ch. xi. in Jus. Div. Min. part ii. p. 132.

4) Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. pp. 84, 85.

5) Charity Serm. in behalf of the Gaelic Ep. Soc. 1631, in Presb. Rev. 1842, p. 8.

can instance in many before my time, our bishops did not reordain him before they admitted him to his charge, as they must have done if his former ordination in France had been void.'[1]

Bishop Croft, in his True State of the Primitive Church, has these remarkable words:[2] 'And now I pray give me leave to examine a little Petavius's rare conceits, which he conceives will settle all former objections, and will meet with no new ones. He confesses the presbyters of the apostles' times were all of one order, namely, bishops: because the pastors of each congregation might perform those several acts he mentions, which a bare presbyter is not capable of. And why not capable of them? how doth he prove this? He brings not one tittle of proof for this out of scripture, where there are good proofs to the contrary. St. Peter, and St. John, presbyters, could do all these, and more: *ergo* presbyters are capable of all. But, saith he, 'the apostles were bishops also;' 'also' is impertinent, as signifying somewhat else, whereas I say and prove it is one and the same order, only another name. It lies upon him to prove this difference of orders; and how doth he prove it? Because presbyters cannot do the acts of a bishop. Why, this is the thing in question; and thus he runs round to prove this by that, and that by this, and not one tittle out of scripture for either. I know full well of several canons of councils, made, some at one time, some at another; the bishops reserved many things to themselves, whereof most of them had been practiced formerly by presbyters, and the canons were made to prevent the like for the future; for, had there not been such a practice, there had been no need of such canons, whereby they reserved these things unto themselves, and for their own greatness would needs persuade the world that presbyters were not capable of them. This being so, I desire to know who, after the apostles' days, began this new kind of ordination of presbyters, or elders. Not bishops; the apostles ordained none such. Who then? and by what authority was this new order set up? The scripture mentions it not: when and by whom came it, then? A very bold undertaking without scripture, or apostolical practice.'

And that all the outcry now made about the invalidity and danger of presbyterian ordination is mere cant, for the sake of upholding the hierarchy by an *ad terrorem* appeal to

1) See Presb. Rev. Ap. 1842, p. 9. 2) Scott's Coll. of Tr. vol. vii. pp. 299 and 301.

the fears of the ignorant, is manifest from the fact, that all ordinations in the anglican church are directed by laymen, and even, as at this time, by lay women. One of their own selves shall be witness against them, the able author of 'Christianity Independent of the Civil Government,' who is, we believe from internal evidence, archbishop Whateley, and from his own assurance 'an episcopalian.' He says,[1] 'but it may be more to the purpose, to inquire what spiritual authority the king of Great Britain actually exercises? Does he not virtually ordain bishops? And is not ordination a spiritual function? I am not speaking of the *appointment* to a particular *see* of one who is *already* a bishop; *that* is no exercise of spiritual authority, any more than the institution to a particular benefice of one already a minister, but of the determination *who shall* be a bishop. If the patron of a benefice had power to present a layman, and to *compel the bishop to ordain* him priest, this would surely be a virtual ordination by the patron; and the case I am considering is parallel to that, unless it be said, that whoever is fit to be a priest, is necessarily fit to be a bishop, in which case the very notion of *ordination* would be nugatory, since you might as well talk of *ordaining* a man lecturer, or prebendary. It may be said, that the chapter, a clerical body, are the electors of a bishop, and the bishops his ordainers, and I grant that this makes his ordination real and valid; but does not *the compulsion* under which this is done imply an interference of the civil magistrate in spirituals? And is not this an encroachment on the kingdom which is not of this world? If the pope had power to determine who should and who should not be admitted to holy orders within these realms, would not the pope be the *spiritual* governor of the churches there existing? There is something, I think, strained and fanciful in the application of the term simony to the sale of benefices, since it is not a *spiritual office*, but a temporal *endowment* that is sold. But there is something that does remind one of Simon Magus in saying, 'I will give the church secular power, and wealth, on condition that you will let me, indirectly if you will, but in effect, ordain bishops; if you will let me say to whomsoever I will, not immediately indeed, but by compelling another to say it, 'receive the Holy Ghost for the office of a bishop.' 'He offered them money, saying, 'Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my

1) P. 107, N. Y. ed. and p. 121.

hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.' Thy money perish with thee! thou hast no part nor lot in this matter.'

'But it may be said, the chapter, or the bishop may refuse to listen to the royal recommendation. True, and I hope they will, if ever the king should recommend an improper person; but they are *punishable for it by law*. They have no *legal* power to refuse. A protestant in Spain may defy the pope, if he is willing to be burnt for it. Nero allowed the christians the option of obeying him in religious matters, or of suffering punishment; because this is an option which no one can take away.'

Again: 'An English bishop did not ordain an American to officiate in a country not under British dominion, without asking, and obtaining permission of his government, which had just as much to do with the business as the government of Abyssinia.'

Again, at p. 170: 'But no royal recommendation should be allowed to determine *who should be ordained* bishop, unless you come to the conclusion, and OPENLY PROCLAIM IT, that a bishop has no *spiritual office*, distinct from that of the presbyter, AND CONSEQUENTLY THAT THE ORDINATION OF THE BISHOP IS A NULLITY.' So much for these boasted anglican ordinations, as estimated even by an archbishop, or, at least, an episcopalian.

## § 4. *Presbyterian ordination is sustained by the universal judgment of the church.*

But not only is it thus certain that ordination by presbyters has been sanctioned in many ways, and at different times, and that it was the primitive order of the church; it may be further shown that, even by the universal judgment of the church, as to what constitutes the essentials of ordination, its validity may be fully sustained, and the futility of all prelatical objections made manifest, even on their own principles.

And first, what, according to the universal judgment of the church, is essential to a valid ordination. Here we shall, at once, go to fountain authority, the learned work of Father Courayer,[1] and through him to Morinus and Martene. Courayer warrants the application of his 'principles and maxims to determine other facts that might happen of the same kind.'[2]

1) Defence of the Validity of the English Ordinations, by the Rev. Father Peter Francis Le Courayer. Canon, Reg. and libr. of St. Genevieve, Paris. London, 1728. 2d ed.

2) Ibid, p. 7.

Generally, then, he states,[1] that 'at last this was laid down as an undoubted maxim, that those ordinations, where nothing essential is omitted, should be accounted valid, by reason of the character which is indelible.' As to the matter of ordination he states,[2] the proofs produced by Morinus have appeared so convincing to all learned divines, that they agree unanimously with him in opinion, that *the imposition of hands is the only essential matter of this sacrament.* Therefore, says this learned writer, the school divines, being forced to it at last, they had recourse to the imposition of hands, which alone has the warrant of all the fathers, and all the ancient rituals, both Greek and Latin, in its favor.' And, indeed, though the schoolmen of late years would fain have either the unction or the imposition of the book of the gospels, or even the delivery, (as they called it,) of the instruments suitable to the order and dignity conferred, (as Durandus, bishop of Mende, thought,) to be looked upon as essential parts of the matter of this sacrament; yet all these opinions are rejected now as unsustainable, since it is not only easy to show that the usage of these things hath neither been perpetual nor universal in the church, but also that the scripture mentions only imposition of hands.'

He lays it down, therefore, as 'a certain maxim, that may serve as a principle in the determination of this point,'[3] that 'the imposition of hands is the only essential matter of ordination.'[4] This conclusion he repeatedly states.[5]

And now, as to the *form* of ordination, what universal principle does he lay down? The schoolmen maintained that, as to form, the words 'receive thou the Holy Ghost,' &c. were essential. 'But,' says Courayer,[6] 'however general this opinion has prevailed, it is very difficult to withstand the reasons which Morinus and Martene bring to refute it; the most convincing of which is, that these words were never at all in use among the eastern christians, and the use of them, in the Latin church is of a very late date. 'There are no Latin rituals, of any antiquity,' (says Morinus,) 'to be met with, that have these words in them, nor is there any mention made of them, even in many of much later times. It is scarce four hundred years ago, since they began to be used among the Latins; but, as for the Greeks and Syrians, they neither do at

1) Ibid, p. 6.
2) Ibid, p. 93.
3) P. 92.
4) P. 94.
5) The Abbe Renaudot, he claims as agreeing to this principle, pp. 95, 241, fully.
6) Ibid, pp. 95–97. On page 117, he quotes in favor a number of divines.

present nor ever did make use of them; so that there is no reason for making them of the substance of ordination.' Martene is of the same sentiments upon this subject with the learned Morinus. These assertions are supported by all manner of proofs that can be desired, in a case of this nature; for of all the Oriental and Latin rituals published by Morinus, Mabillon, and Martene, there are not above two or three, and those modern enough, in which these words are contained.

'Nor is it any more difficult to show that the essence of the form of ordination is not annexed to *any* stated, fixed, and uniform prayers in all churches. The bare looking into the ancient pontificals and rituals of different churches, demonstrates it. The prayers contained in the Greek rituals are different from those we see in the Oriental and Latin rituals; and even among the Latin ones, though a greater uniformity be observed in them, yet there are differences enough to be found to warrant this conclusion, that though they were all directed to the same end, yet every church had the liberty of determining itself as to the particular form of words it would use preferably to any other.' 'We may say, therefore, in general, that the invocation of the Holy Ghost upon the bishop elect, makes the form of ordination; and does, jointly with the imposition which accompanies it, of course, constitute properly what we call the sacrament of ordination.'

And now as to the ordainers. Our author supposes that Cranmer, and the other prelates and divines associated with him, were pure 'presbyterians,' and designed 'to extinguish episcopacy.' He shows that, even on this ground, their ordinations were valid, and for this he gives the following maxims or principles.[1] 'The first reason, almost generally now received in the schools is, that the inward intention of the priest has no manner of influence upon the validity or invalidity of a sacrament. All that is required is, to do as the church does, and that is performed when all the essential parts of a rite prescribed by the church is complied with, which is *per modum religiosæ ceremoniæ*, as the schools express it.' 'A second reason, and it is what the church founds her opinion upon in prohibiting the repetition of those sacraments which stamp a character is, that the intention not being made manifest, the outward behavior can only be judged of. It matters not whether the bishop or priest privately makes a jest of the sacraments which he administers, it is no matter

1) Ibid, pp. 158–161.

if he believes them to want force and virtue; his own thoughts neither make them valid nor invalid. It is the execution of our Saviour's commands, and a compliance with the essential parts of a rite practiced in the church, which renders a consecration effective, or, if you please, imprints a character.' 'A third reason, which may serve to prove that the validity of the ordinal does not depend upon the erroneous opinions maintained by those who composed it, is, that, supposing the changes made did not take away from the substance of the form; that is to say, the essence of the prayers which compose the ordinal, which is indeed the fact, then it is still to be looked upon as the work of the church, and in some sort to intend to do the same as the church intends, notwithstanding the changes and alterations produced in the ceremonial part.' 'These reasons are supported by facts, and by the example of the ancient church. It does not appear that ever the validity or the invalidity of sacraments was determined by the opinions of those who drew up the forms whereby they were conveyed, and regard was only had to the substance of the form, and to the manner in which it was expressed.'[1]

But further, Courayer shows that the same principles apply to all the sacraments.[2]

Taking, therefore, these principles as our guide, we must necessarily conclude that presbyterian ordinations are valid according to the universal judgment of the church. As to matter, they contain imposition of hands.[3] As to form, they are always conferred by prayer for the Holy Ghost, to be given to the individuals ordained. And as to the ordainers, they are not invalidated by the fact that they are presbyterians, nor is their act in any way nullified. Moreover, our baptisms have never been questioned, and since orders are to be estimated by the same rule, these cannot be doubted.

It is, however, objected, that our ordinations imply opposition to the authority of the church, and on this account become invalid. Father Courayer answers,[4] 'it has been demonstrated that the change which was made in the form of ordination, has nothing essential in it, and does not affect the substance of it.' 'This form is not, as it is supposed, intended as an opposite form to that of the church, but on the contrary, to

1) A host of authorities may be seen quoted in the Corpus Juris Canonicum Decret. part i. dist. 68, p. 198. Prague, 1728. Fol. to show that a person once consecrated to any order, even though by one not a bishop, or invalidly, must not be again ordained.

2) See p. 162, of the work referred to, note, also p. 292 of the same work.

3) Form of Government, ch. xv. § 14, pp. 443, 444.

4) Ibid, pp. 163, 164.

restore, as much as possible, the simplicity the church formerly practiced in the dispensation of the sacraments.'

It is further objected, that we are in a state of schism, and that, therefore, our ordinations are null and void. Courayer replies,[1] 'When it is further said, that the prelates and divines, who drew up the new ordinal, are not to be deemed as acting in the name of the church, because they had declared war against her; this reproach is not particular to the English, it bears generally upon all those who have separated themselves from the church, by heresy or schism; and, if the same reason has not invalidated all the sacraments from being allowed, which they administered, preserving the matter and the essential form, the same justice ought to be allowed the English, who, notwithstanding their schism, have preserved all the essential parts of ordination.' Again, he asks, 'granting that we are in a state of schism,[2] how is it proved from thence that the sacrament is null, which such a church administers? There can be no nullity, but for one of these two reasons. Either that schism nullifies all sacraments administered out of the church, or else that the changes introduced by the schism affect the substance of the sacraments. The first reason is false, and disavowed by all catholic divines. And I have proved the falsehood of the second, by making it as clear as noonday, that the English have preserved, in their form, all that was ever reputed essential.'

Is it still objected, that our ordinations are performed contrary to the authority of the Romish and English churches? Courayer replies,[3] 'that each church, and even the church of Rome, has no right to make other churches submit to her own proper discipline, as it is proved at large by the author of the new treatise concerning the authority of the pope, printed at the Hague in 1720. In short, however jealous the popes may have been to maintain their authority, the more prudent have been so moderate as to leave particular churches at their liberty to regulate their own discipline; nay, even when they might have prescribed.' 'The council of Trent,' he adds,[4] 'only refused to acknowledge such a power to be lodged in particular pastors.' 'But I affirm, moreover, that it is not absolutely true, that the church of Rome has always a right to oblige particular churches to observe the discipline established in the rest of the church.' 'But if these churches are obliged for good reasons to make alterations in important points of

1) P. 165.
2) P. 175.
3) P. 179.
4) Pp. 184, 185.

discipline, I do not see wherein the church of Rome can oblige them to conform to the rest.' And even had the church of Rome or England this power, what then? 'Whether,' says Courayer,[1] 'the church of Rome has power or no, to make particular churches submit to the discipline universally established, yet it suffices, at present, that this power which we seem to allow her does not give her any right to make those sacraments null, wherein there have been no alterations made, but in things not determined, and where all things have been preserved that have been reputed essential in the church.'

Is it still urged, that for our form of ordination no precedent can be found in any ancient ordinal or form, Courayer replies,[2] 'lastly, another reason which gives yet a greater force to the three former, is, that it appears evidently by ancient monuments, that there were no liturgies or written forms for the administration of the sacraments used in the church before the fifth century.'

Is it still further urged, that we are actually separated from the Romish and English churches, as the latter church is from the former, Courayer, after showing the diversified forms of ancient ordinals, remarks,[3] 'but that which is of most importance to observe, is, that these alterations which appear so essential, were made by sects separated from the catholic church; whose power was never disputed to make these changes, and whose consecration was never reputed null and invalid. The learned are, indeed, agreed, that these sects were separated from the catholic church when they drew up their liturgies.' 'If we proceed from the form of administering the eucharist, to that of ordination, we shall discover as little uniformity between the ordinations of the Greeks and the Latins, and the ordinations of the Syrians, as well Nestorians as Eutychians, and the Coptics, and this without any body's ever disputing the ordination of all these sects.'

And is it objected, that presbyterian ordination is actually contrary to the ecclesiastical canons, Courayer tells our objectors,[4] that, in ordination, it is known how rigid and strict the ecclesiastical laws are, that require three bishops for the consecration of a bishop. This law is at least as ancient, as general, and as rigid as those which prescribe the unctions, and the other ceremonies which accompany ordination. Nevertheless, in an hundred instances, when necessity required, the ordinations of one alone have been received as good, which

1) Pp. 186 and 187.
2) P. 189.
3) Pp. 194–196; see also 292.
4) P. 281.

had been rejected as null, if the neglect of this law had given room to believe that the intention of the consecrators was not the same with that of the church.' Neither is this to be presumed contrary to the authority of the church,[1] 'since in effect it cannot be imagined a sacrament conferred in heresy is valid, but for this reason; that it is supposed what is done in heresy is in consequence of the power of the church, which an error does not suspend. But if the profession of an error cannot suspend the power of the church, the church herself cannot put a stop to her proper power, and refuse to acknowledge for her own work what was performed out of her bosom. The author asserts it, and I know not how it can be disputed with him.'

To conclude, therefore,[2] 'reordinations have always been odious in the church; and to justify them it must appear, either that the nullity be evident, or that the doubt be solid and founded upon weighty reasons, or upon facts which are impossible to be disputed. Now there is neither an evident nullity, nor a doubt solid enough to oblige us to reiterate the ordinations of the English.'

'Such is the succession which is preserved in the sects which are separated from the church. When the Donatists made a schism, the succession of their bishops was acknowledged, they were nevertheless guilty of the same intrusion which the English are reproached with; they erected altar against altar, they put themselves in the place of catholic bishops, acknowledged in them the validity of the priesthood, and were far from disputing their succession; they offered to give place to them, provided they would by a reunion put an end to the schism.' 'So that the result of this affair is, that there has been little uniformity in the church as to this matter; and that if the principle received at this time in the catholic schools takes place, we cannot dispute with the English the validity of their ordinations.'

### § 5. *Presbyterian ordination is, therefore, valid and regular. Objections answered.*

From what has now been made to appear, the futility of the common objection of prelatists, that presbyters never having received the power of giving ordination, never can impart it, is manifest. For if the order of the sacred ministry is one,

1) P. 303.

2) Pp. 306, 320, and 321; see also Claude's Def. of the Reform. vol. ii. p. 288.

however its offices may, by human arrangement, be divided; and if that order is instituted by Christ, and depends on his authority for all its power, and upon his charter for all its functions; then all who are introduced into that order are, by virtue of Christ's commission, clothed with all the powers and attributes of the ministry. These powers are derived from Christ and not from the ordainers, who only invest the elected subject with them. Every presbyter, therefore, must necessarily possess the power of ordination as much as the power of preaching. Besides, this objection is as fatal to the ordaining power of bishops as of presbyters. For bishops, in their ordination, receive no power to ordain other bishops, or archbishops, and, therefore, on this rule, all such ordinations are nullities. The bishop received only sacerdotal order, since his ordainers had nothing else to give, and had no power to confer on him the power of conferring on others the power of ordination,[1] and the pope himself, is chosen and set apart to his office by cardinals, who are called the presbyters of Rome.

The ordination of presbyterian ministers is, therefore, scriptural, valid, and regular. It is performed by such bishops as were instituted by the apostles and existed in the apostolic churches. All bishops, as originally instituted, had the power of ordination, since there were no other ministers to perform the duty; and since no church has any authority to introduce a new order of subject presbyters without power to ordain, it follows, that all who are truly presbyters have full authority to ordain. In ancient times, the pastors of all city churches were empowered to ordain, and as many of our ministers occupy this position, they also possess the same authority. In ancient times, country pastors were also allowed to ordain, and therefore may our country pastors exercise the same function. The president of a presbytery, according to all primitive custom may ordain, and, therefore, may our ministers, who are all eligible to this office, and do, in their turn, occupy and fill it. Ordination by a presbytery, is surely scriptural and apostolical, and yet all our ordinations are performed by a presbytery, and by a presbytery composed of scriptural bishops. Besides, bishops and presbyters are allowed, by prelatists themselves, to differ only in grade, and not in order. But *ad ordinem pertinet ordinare, non ad gradum*, and hence, presbyters must possess the right and power of ordination. In this conclusion, we are sanctioned by the universal practice of the church in requiring the coöperation of presby-

1) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 78, 79.

ters in every ordination. Again, they that have the keys of the kingdom of heaven must possess the power of ordination, since these keys were not delivered separately, but to one and the same persons; since they included all the authority and power in any way intrusted to the ministry; and since there is no other possible function to which this power might be attributed. But as presbyters have been shown to possess the keys, they must be regarded as empowered to ordain. The office of presbyters no one denies to be of divine institution. And when an individual is duly qualified for that office by the gifts of God; when he has been elected and chosen by the christian people to minister to them in holy things; and when he has been set apart to the work of the ministry by those ecclesiastical persons who have authority in the churches to whom he is to minister; then is that individual characterized by every scriptural mark of a true and valid minister. And such is every minister of the presbyterian church.

### § 6. *Presbyterian ordination is more valid, certain, and regular, than prelatical ordination.*

Prelates shudder at the idea of extending their charity so far as to believe that our presbyters are ministers at all, or that they can impart any kind of ordination. But from what has been said it will be manifest, not only that presbyterian ordination is valid, but that, when weighed in a just balance, it is immeasurably superior to that which is prelatical. It is so because presbyters, clothed with all the powers granted to them in the presbyterian church, in distinction from those officers in episcopal churches called presbyters, are the true, scriptural, and primitive bishops. This we have already established. Our opponents confess, that this is the fact. Like them, they are ordained in every city and in every church.[1] They have the particular episcopacy or oversight, rule, and instruction of all the flock committed to them.[2] Their churches are, like every particular church spoken of in the whole New Testament, such single congregations as can come together into one place for worship and communion.[3] Every description given in scripture of the duties and qualifications of bishops, most fully and literally apply to presbyterian bishops.[4] Presbyters are thus the true and only scrip-

1) Tit. 1 : 5, and Acts, 13 : 33.

2) Acts, 20 : 28.

3) 1 Cor. 11 : 16, 18, 20, &c., and 14, 19, &c.; Acts, 14 : 27. See a mass of evidence on this point, in Baxter on Episc. part ii. ch. iii. pp. 6, 7, &c.

4) Acts, 20, and 13 : 33; 1 Tim. 3, and 5th; Tit. 1 : 5; 1 Pet. 5 : 1–3.

tural bishops, and, of course, prelates cannot be such. And hence the ordination of presbyters is more truly scriptural and episcopal than that of prelates. For since every society is specified and characterized by its officers and heads, and since the order of prelates, the order of prelatical presbyters, or half ministers, and the prelatical order of deacons, are all alike unknown to scripture, the prelatic church and its ordinations, must be regarded as entirely different from those of the apostolic churches.

But our presbyters are also the truly *primitive* bishops, while prelates can find no prototypes in the first two or three centuries, and hence diocesan bishops, as such, are usurpers and innovators, and have no original power to ordain at all. They can only ordain as presbyters, while as prelates they render their ordinations irregular, and in open contrariety to the apostolical and primitive order of the church.

The primitive bishop was elected to his office by the people,[1] who were acquainted with his life, manners, and abilities; whereas in the choice of prelates, the people have no voice. The charge of the primitive bishop was a single, though often numerous congregation, whilst the charge of a prelate may be several hundred.[2] In proof of this position, it will be sufficient to allege the authority of Stillingfleet, when bishop, in his sermon against Separation. 'Though, when the churches increased, the occasional meetings were frequent in several places, yet still there was but one church, and one altar, and one baptistry, and one bishop, with many presby-

1) See this abundantly proved in Baxter's Episcop. part ii. p. 123, &c., and p. 67, where are many authorities. Lord Brooke on Episc. pp. 71, 72; Smectymnuus, Lond. 1641, p. 33. Bishop Burnet, in his Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. Conf. 4, p. 164, allows that this power was taken from the people in the *fourth* century. See also full on in bp. Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, pp. 20–22; Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. pp. 227, 228–231. In his 67th epistle, Cyprian gives his own opinion, and that of a number of bishops, in which they at length prove, that it is the duty of the people to withdraw from any bishop, morally or otherwise unfit, and to elect another in his stead. This right was also secured to the people by the 15th canon of the 7th general council. Cyprian, ep. 67, p. 203. Bellarmine himself confesses, 'ut clerus et populus episcopum eligeret, hic modus fuit in usu tempore Chrysostomi, Ambrosii, Augustini, Leonis, Gregorii, l. i. de Clemens, c. 9. So also Morton, Apol. Cathol. part i. c. 85, p. 257.

2) See this point established at length in Baxter on Episc. passim. Boyse's Anct. Episcopacy, which is devoted to this point. Baynes's Diocesan's Tryall, pp. 6, 7, 43; Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 79; Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 27, 28, 61, 86, 109, 114, 120, 152. As late as the 4th Aurelian Council, A. D. 545, (Binii Concil. tom. iv. p. 197,) it is ordained, that bishops shall be consecrated in their own church, *cui præfuturus est*.' There were no dioceses in Scotland, till 1070. Broughton's Eccl. Dict. vol. i. p. 163. See on the primitive bishop, also Campbell's Eccl. Lect. lect. vii. p. 121; Clarkson's Prim. Episcopacy, passim.

ters assisting him. Which is so plain in antiquity as to the churches planted by the apostles themselves, that none but a great stranger to the church can call it in question.'[1] 'A church and a diocese,' says archbishop Whateley, 'seem to have been a considerable time coextensive and identical.'[2] Now, when we consider the present character of a prelate's charge,[3] we may well say with the above author, 'Episcopalians have universally so varied from the apostolical institution, as to have in one church several bishops, each of whom consequently differs in the office he holds, in a most important point from one of the primitive bishops, as much as the governor of any one of our colonies does from a sovereign prince.'[4] Bishop Beveridge, in like manner, allows that he could not find anything about the visitations of dioceses before the sixth or seventh century.[5] That this was the character of the primitive bishop, as described by Clemens Romanus, Justin Martyr, Ignatius, Polycarp, Tertullian,

1) See in Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 202.

2) Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 20, p. 131, Eng. ed. 'At first,' says bishop Burnet, 'every bishop *had but one parish*.' 'All things continued thus in a parochial government, till toward the end of the second century.' Vind. of Ch. of Scotl. Conf. 4th, p. 163, ed. 2d. Lond. 1724. The same thing is admitted and urged by Broughton, in his Eccl. Dict. tom. i. pp. 158, 159, who substantiates his opinion by appealing to many of the fathers. For 200 years, Rome and Alexandria were the only two places that had more than one stated assembly in the same place. Baxter's Episc. p. 17.

3) Respecting the comparative state of other countries with our own in this respect, we give from the Churchman's Monthly Review the following statement: 'Italy, Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, with a population of at least 24 millions, have in round numbers 270 sees. We, with 16 millions in England and Wales, have only 26. Greece, with less than a million population, has 36 sees. France, before the revolution, had 145 sees, and 28 millions. Spain, 60 bishops, and 10 or 12 millions.—Romanists in Ireland, 6 1-2 or 7 millions, and 30 bishops. American church, (less than a million,) has 20 bishops. Ancient Asia Minor, about twice as large as England, had 400 sees. From which statement it will appear, that a single bishop in these several countries, has had the following numbers committed to his spiritual charge:

| | |
|---|---|
| In Italy, Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, | 88,000 |
| In Greece, | 27,000 |
| In France, before the revolution, | 193,000 |
| In Spain, | 183,000 |
| In America, | 50,000 |
| In Ancient Asia Minor, | 80,000 |
| In England, | 600,000 |

The diocese of Lincoln contains 1,072 benefices. If the bishop were to visit and preach in each parish of his diocese at the average of *four* every week, which, it need hardly be said, is far too high an average, considering 'that which cometh upon him daily, the care of all the churches,' *five* years would be required for a circuit of the diocese of Lincoln; and if the weekly average be set at *two*, (which, with the necessary deduction for the parliamentary and other duties is fully adequate to the powers, both physical and mental, of ordinary men, and even bishops,) the visitation of this diocese would occupy *ten* years. On the same principle, the visitation of the diocese of Norwich, containing 920 benefices, would occupy *eight* years; of Exeter. York, and Chester, *six*,' &c.

4) Ibid, p. 133.

5) Wks. vol. ii. p. 98.

Cyprian, and other writers, has been incontrovertibly established by many writers, and will be seen in our quotations from the fathers.[1] And yet will high-churchmen venture to affirm, that, 'in *the most primitive* ages, when as yet there were no christian princes, bishops were elected by the clergy and people, in the presence of the metropolitan and other provincial bishops.'[2] So utterly regardless are they of the admitted truth in the case, when they can impose on ignorant credulity.

The primitive bishops were ordained by neighboring parochial bishops or presbyters, constituting a presbytery; while in the ordination of modern prelates, all such bishops are excluded, and only distant prelates are invited to assist. The primitive bishop administered all the ordinances to the people of his parish, and considered himself charged with the oversight of all the particular souls that belonged to his episcopal charge, so as to exercise a personal inspection over them.[3] The modern prelate, on the contrary, does not and cannot pretend to exercise any such oversight, nor can have any personal acquaintance, in many cases, with one in a thousand of those under his charge. There is not a prelate in existence, who even attempts to discharge all the duties incumbent upon a primitive bishop.[4] The primitive bishop sat with his presbyters in the same congregation, the deacons also being present and standing. He ordinarily exercised no act of ecclesiastical discipline, without the consent and concurrence of all his presbyters, and in the presence of his flock.[5] Nor did he ever ordain any to any office without the assistance of his presbytery. But in all these respects modern prelates are no more like ancient bishops, than is the pope like a pastor, or an eastern despot like a patriarchal chief.

In short, the primitive bishop was no more than the pri-

1) See Boyse's Anct. Episcopacy, ch. ii. pp. 22–211. He gives a very full collation of the epistles of Ignatius. As to the Cyprianic bishop, in particular, see Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, especially pp. 448, 452, 453, 461, 502–504. Also, Causa Episcopatus Hier. Lucifuga, or a Confut. of Sage's Princ. of the Cyprianic age; 4to. Edinb. 1706. pp. 274. Baxter on Episc. part ii. ch. vii. gives 31 arguments to disprove the claim of diocesan churches, and to show that they were anciently parochial. As to the smallness and number of the primitive parishes, see Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, pp. 31, &c. 33. Thorndike on Govt. of the Ch. pp. 63, 64.

2) Palmer's Antiq. of the English Liturgy, vol. ii. p. 287.

3) See the above authors, and especially as it regards Ignatius.

4) See this argument urged, with overwhelming force, by Baxter on Episc. part ii. ch. xviii. and xix. p. 143, &c.; and by a host of authorities from the ancients, councils, &c. p. 178, &c. from the Reformers, p. 179; and from other English divines, p. 214. Also in ch. xvi. p. 121, &c.

5) Caus. 4, q. 4. See full proofs adduced by Burnet, in his Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 57, &c.

mus presbyter, the moderator, or presiding presbyter, having no order, power, or jurisdiction independent of, or in superiority to, his fellow-presbyters.[1] So that the fourth council of Carthage, A. D. 398, makes void all sentences of bishops, which were not confirmed by the presence of the clergy.[2] This canon was also inserted in those of Egbert, who was archbishop of York, in Saxon times, and afterwards included in the canon law itself.[3] Modern prelates, however, build their claims upon being of an order by divine right superior to that of presbyters, and as thus possessing a plenitude of prelatical power and grace. The primitive bishop recognised presbyters as of the same order, and having the same inherent power, with himself: so that in his absence, they exercised all his functions, and took entire oversight of the church.[4] Modern prelates, however, have utterly destroyed the original institution of presbyters, so that prelatically ordained presbyters are deprived of many of the original powers and functions belonging to their office.

And thus does it appear, that modern prelates pervert the original form, order, constitution, and design of the church, and of the ministry, and the whole framework of ecclesiastical polity.[5] They are entirely different officers from the primitive bishops, claiming different powers, and discharging different functions. The ancient bishop was a parochial presbyter, having superintendence over a particular charge. In some cases, he exercised his office alone, where the extent of his charge was small, as in the case of Gregory Thaumaturgus,[6] and in other cases he was the moderator of many presbyters in the same church.[7]

Presbyters, therefore, have[8] 'episcopal ordination, even such as the canons require, being set apart by two or three

1) See, ch. vi. See also Jameson's Sum of the Episcopal Controversy, pp. 143, 144, 152, 155, 186.

2) Binii Concil. tom. i. p. 728, canon 23. See also Cyp. Ep. 46, ad Comal.

3) Spelman's Concilia, Lond. 1639, p. 275, c. 343; and Usher's Reduction of Episc. pp. 4, 5; Canoni Jur. 15, q. 7, cap. Nullus; Decret, part ii. can. 15, q. 7. See also Smectymnuus, p. 38; Basil, Epist. 75; Ambrose, lib. x. ep. 80; and so Cyril and Gregory, as in ibid.

4) That this is the doctrine of antiquity, see proved in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 86–88; Dr. Hammond, in Baxter, p. 99; Petavius in do. p. 68; Cyprian, Ep. 67, § 2, with Marshall's note. See also Cyprian, ep. 71, p. 227, and ep. 72, p. 228. Bishop Burnet, in his Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. conf. 4, most fully and repeatedly avows this opinion. See p. 165, and p. 177, where he says, 'I acknowledge bishop and presbyter to be one and the same office.' So also on p. 181.

5) See this shown at length in Baxter's Episc. part ii. pp. 85–92, 121, 122, 123, 125, 126, 134.

6) See Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 29 and 107.

7) See proof of this fact, ibid.

8) Clarkson's Prim. Episc. pp. 231, 232.

pastors, at least, who are as truly diocesans as the ancient bishops for some whole ages. The presbyter bishop is also elected by the people; and of old he could never be, nor be accounted a bishop, whatever ordination he had, that was not so elected. And besides, he has as large a diocese as most in the best times of the church; and so makes it his business to feed and rule the flock, and exercise the power of the keys.' We hence infer, that presbyters, as they exist in the presbyterian church, having all the qualities, powers, offices, functions, jurisdiction, and order, possessed by the scriptural and primitive bishops, are identical with them. And if, therefore, the power of ordination belongs, by divine right, to these only, then it cannot belong by divine right to prelates; and, hence, ordination, as performed by presbyterian ministers, is more regular, scriptural, and primitive than that of prelates; so that if only one or the other can be correct, it alone can be the true, original, and *proper ordination.*[1]

It will also appear, from what has been said, that the ordination of presbyterians is the only episcopal ordination to be found in the church, since prelates are not bishops, either according to the primitive or apostolical understanding of the office, but are, in fact, archbishops. So that the true question between us is, not as to the validity of ordination by *bishops*, but whether or not any other than archbishops have a right to ordain.[2] And to this question, who can hesitate in giving an immediate reply.

1) See Baxter on Episc. part ii. pp. 227 – 232.

2) See Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 318.

# CHAPTER XI.

## ON DEACONS, AS A THIRD ORDER OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

### § 1. *The ground assumed by prelacy.*

We have thus far, for the sake of distinctness, confined our argument to the claims of presbyters and prelates. But it is necessary to remember that prelatists affirm, that 'it is evident to all men, diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' time there have been *these orders of ministers* in Christ's church — bishops, priests, and *deacons*.'[1] It is here, therefore, with all positiveness declared, that Christ and his apostles instituted deacons as a third order, of *ministers*, that is, for coöperating in the work of preaching, baptizing, and other ministerial functions.[2] Upon this basis, as much as upon the order of prelates, the existence and stability of the prelatical sect, together with its entire claim to the character of a scriptural and apostolical church, is founded. If, therefore, it can be shown that this pillar of the hierarchy is unsound, the whole fabric must be abandoned, since two of its three pillars will be cut from under it.

### § 2. *The deacon, according to scripture, not an order in the christian ministry, but a distinct office.*

All the reformed churches agree in believing that the scriptures clearly point out deacons as distinct *officers* in the church, whose business it is to take care of the poor — to distribute among them the collections which may be raised for their use — and generally to manage the temporal affairs

1) Pref. to Form and Order of making Bishops, in Common Prayer Book. See also Laws and Canons of the Prot. Ep. Ch.

2) See Potter on Ch. Govt. pp. 48, 49. Am. ed.

of the church. They are mentioned as a distinct class of officers in the church at Philippi, (Phil. 1: 1,) — in 1 Tim. 3: 8, 12, 13—and probably in 1 Peter, 4: 10, 11, and Rom. 12: 6, 7. Of their election by the people, and ordination by the presbytery, we have a full account in Acts, 6: 1–6. Their character, and the nature and design of their office, must therefore be drawn from this history, in connection with the qualifications laid down for their office by the inspired apostles. Nor can there be any hesitation in coming to our conclusion, since the language in both cases is clear and explicit.

The model of the christian church was formed, as we shall see, upon the order of the Jewish synagogue. Now in every synagogue there were parnasin, or deacons, 'or such as had the care of the poor, whose work it was to gather alms for them from the congregation, and to distribute it to them.'[1] Such is the opinion of Lightfoot, which he abundantly corroborates by quotations from Jewish writings. Similar, also, is the judgment of bishop Burnet, who says, 'the charge of the parnasin, or deacons, was to gather the collections of the rich and to distribute them to the poor.'[2]

It was evidently in accordance with this existing order, that the apostles, by divine direction, instituted the office of deacons; and we may therefore expect to find the duties assigned to them to be similar. This, accordingly, is undoubtedly the case. The reason given by the apostles for the institution was, that 'it was not reasonable that they should leave the word of God, (that is, the ministry of the word,) and serve tables.' (Acts, 6: 2.) 'Wherefore, brethren,' say they, 'look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word,' (verses 3, 4.) Now these tables must refer to the supply of the temporal necessities of the poor, out of that common fund which was committed to the apostles. An evident inconsistency or incongruity is alleged to exist between the discharge of this duty and the ministry of the word, which could not be the case were the allusion made to the administration of ordinances. Such administration, prelatists will be the last to think the apostles would disparage and hand over to an inferior order, especially when there were so many of themselves, besides the

1) Lightfoot's Works, vol. iii. pp. 189, 268, and vol. viii. p. 106, &c. and vol. xi. p. 89, &c.

2) Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 53. See also Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 237. Mosheim de Reb. Chr. M.

presbyters then or shortly afterwards ordained, with whom they were associated as a presbytery in discharging all ministerial duties to the church at Jerusalem.[1] With this most explicit statement of the office of deacons, agree the descriptions given elsewhere. The qualifications laid down in 1 Tim. 3, are precisely those which the discharge of such responsible and trusty services would require. In Romans, 12: 6, 7, the deaconship is immediately connected with 'giving' and 'showing mercy.'[2] And in like manner in 1 Peter, 4: 10, 11, a man is to 'exercise the office of a deacon as of the ability which God giveth' or furnisheth, that is, to the full extent of the supply furnished him in the providence of God.[3] We are, therefore, told, that 'they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree,' that is, says Lightfoot, 'a good degree towards being intrusted with souls when they have been faithful in discharge of their trust concerning the life of the body.'[4] Deacons, therefore, were regarded as probationers for the office of the ministry, if found to be suitable and worthy; but they were not considered to be an order in the ministry. The Holy Ghost designed that they should be a seminary or nursery, out of which the church might be furnished with fit persons for the ministry of the word and doctrine, and in which they might be fully proved and tested before admission into this sacred office.[5] They were officers in the church, associated with the ministers, to attend to the interests of the poor and to the temporalities of the congregation, but they were not, as deacons, partakers of the one priesthood or ministry of the church. Even women might be deaconesses, and as such were ordained, and discharged towards the female members of the church all those duties which the deacons performed towards the males. But, according to apostolic rule, women, we know, were not permitted to teach in the church, and hence deacons could not have been regarded as capable of any of these functions.

### § 3. *This conclusion sustained by eminent prelatists.*

This is the conclusion drawn from the scripture account by the learned episcopalian, Lightfoot, who says, 'the office of

1) See these views, and the subject of the deacon, fully treated of in Neander's History of the Plant. of Christ. by the Ap. vol. i. ch. iii. p. 140, &c.

2) See the original, and Wilson on Deacons. Philadelphia, 1841, p. 5.

3) Wilson, ibid, p. 6. Scott, Henry, Grotius, Piscator, and Calvin in loco.

4) Works, vol. iii. page 258, and vol. xi. p. 90.

5) See Jameson's Sum of the Episcopal Controversy, pp. 94, 95.

deacons was not ministerial or for the preaching of the word, but for providing for the poor.'[1] So speaks Mr. Riddle, who is also an episcopalian, in his learned work on Christian Antiquities, where he says, 'it does not appear that they were appointed to the ministry of the word, but rather the contrary may be inferred from verse 2 and verse 4. Fifthly, they were not spiritual persons, in the ecclesiastical sense of the term.'[2] 'But can it be imagined,' says bishop White, 'that an order instituted for the purpose of serving tables, should, in the very infancy of its existence, have the office of the ministry committed to them? . . . All I contend for is, that at the first institution of the order there could have been no difference between them and laymen, in regard to the preaching of the word and the administering of the sacraments.'[3] As to deacons, bishop Croft, in his Naked Truth, thus delivers himself: 'Having thus stated and united the two pretended and distinct orders of episcopacy and presbytery, I now proceed to the third pretended spiritual order, that of deaconship. Whether this of deaconship be properly to be called an order or an office, I will not dispute; but certainly no spiritual order, for their office was to serve tables, as the scripture phrases it, which, in plain English, is nothing else but overseers of the poor, to distribute justly and discreetly the alms of the faithful; which the apostles would not trouble themselves withal, lest it should hinder them in the ministration of the word and prayer. But as most matters of this world, in process of time, deflect much from the original constitution, so it fell out in this business; for the bishops who *pretended to be successors to the apostles*, by little and little took to themselves the dispensation of alms, first by way of inspection over the deacons, but at length the total management, and the deacons who were mere lay-officers, by degrees crept into the church ministration, and became a reputed spiritual order, and a necessary degree and step to the priesthood, of which I can find nothing in scripture, and the original institution, not a word relating to any thing but the ordering of alms for the poor. And the first I find of their officiating in spiritual matters, is in Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century.'[4]

The same testimony is given by Hadrian Saravia, who describes the deaconship as 'having for its object provision

1) Works, vol. viii. page 106.
2) Christian Antiquities, p. 238.
3) See Dr. Wilson's Memoirs of Bishop White, Letter to Bishop Hobart, p. 365.
4) Scott's Coll. of Tr. vol. vii. pp. 307, 308.

for the corporeal wants of the present life.'[1] 'The early church,' he adds, 'following the examples of the apostles, employed deacons in the ministrations also of the word and sacraments. For it was feared lest their functions should fall into contempt by appearing to be merely a stewardship in things temporal. . . . In order then to increase their dignity, they were authorized to read the gospel to the people and deliver the cup, &c.'[2] Archbishop Wake concurs in the same views with the preceding writers,[3] and so also archbishop Whateley,[4] and archbishop Potter, who says, 'deacons are not ordained to be pastors of the flock of Christ, but only to minister to the pastors,' and, therefore, 'preaching in the public congregation, which does inseparably accompany the care of souls, cannot properly be any part of their office.'[5] He also affirms the same thing as it regards baptizing, from which also he excludes them.[6] The same opinion is openly avowed by Mr. Hinds of Oxford,[7] by the Oxford Tractators,[8] by bishop Beveridge,[9] and by the author of Spiritual Despotism.[10] Mr. Palmer, in his recent elaborate Treatise on the church, is under the necessity of admitting as much. 'The office of deacons,' says he, 'seems at first to have related chiefly to the administering of relief to the poorer brethren.' He only pleads that the church is justified 'in permitting deacons, *in case of necessity*, both to preach and to baptize.'[11] 'They are not qualified to administer the sacrament of the holy eucharist, and other high offices of the ministry.'[12] They are 'limited to duties of a temporal, or at least a very inferior character. They are only *permitted* to baptize and preach: the church has before now given the same permission to laymen in cases of necessity: they are not given the care of souls, or any of the other higher offices of the ministry.'[13] 'It does not seem either by the forms of ordination, or by the ritual, that the church formally invests deacons with the power of celebrating divine service without a presbyter, or performing the rites of marriage, benediction of women after child-birth, visitation of the sick, or burial of the dead.'[14]

1) On the Priesthood, p. 48.
2) Ibid, page 95.
3) Apost. Fathers Prel. Disc. § 15, p. 30.
4) Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 20, p. 131, and § 11, p. 91, Eng. ed.
5) On Ch. Govt. pp. 208, 209.
6) Ibid, p. 228.
7) History of the Rise and Progress of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 218, 220.
8) Oxford Tracts, vol. i. p. 31, Am. ed.
9) See also Beveridge's Works, vol. ii. p. 134.
10) App. to § 4, pp. 433, 434. Eng. ed.
11) Vol. ii. part vi. ch. iii. p. 405, Eng. ed.
12) Ibid, p. 408.
13) Ibid, p. 375.
14) P. 408.

§ 4. *This conclusion sustained also by the Romish church, by the primitive fathers, and by general custom.*

The same is the view taken of this office by the Romish church.[1] Van Espen says, that in the Roman churches, 'as far as concerns deacons, the modern discipline has so declined, that scarcely any office is left to the deacons, except the ministry of the altar. And even in this, the ministry of the deacons is often, (especially in cathedral and collegiate churches,) supplied by presbyters; so that, at last, it has come to this, that deacons are not ordained to discharge the duties of deacons, but to ascend by the deaconate, as a step to the presbyterate. Whence, also, no one is ordained deacon in order that he may continue in that office, but in order that he may be promoted to the presbyterate, when the canonical interval of time has elapsed. Whether this be entirely conformable to the will and intention of the church, let the bishops consider.'[2]

A reference to the primitive church and fathers will confirm these conclusions. Deacons are frequently referred to by Ignatius, but merely in that general way in which they are spoken of in the scriptures.[3] Polycarp quotes, almost verbatim, the apostles' description of their office.[4] Hermas says, 'of such as believed, some were set over inferior functions or services, being intrusted with the care of the poor and widows.'[5] 'The deacons,' says Origen, 'preside over the money-tables of the church.'[6] And again, 'those deacons who do not manage well the money of the church, committed to their care, but act a fraudulent part, &c. . . . these act the part of money-changers, . . . for the deacons were appointed to preside over the tables of the church, as we are taught in the Acts of the Apostles.' Cyprian also speaks of a certain deacon who was 'deposed from his sacred deaconship, on account of his fraudulent and sacrilegious misapplication of the church's money to his own private use, and for his denial of the widows' and orphans' pledges deposited with him.'[7] In his seventy-third epistle, he says, 'whence we understand that it is lawful for none but the presidents of the church, (that is, the pastors,) to baptize and grant remission of sins. Of

1) See Cramp's Text Book of Popery, p. 292. English edition.
2) Jus Canonicum 1, pp. 5, 6. In Palmer, vol. ii. p. 407.
3) See all given in Mr. Wilson on the Deacons, p. 9.
4) Ep. to the Phillipp. § 5.
5) Similitude 9, § 27.
6) Tract. 16, in Math.
7) Ep. 52. See also Ep. 3.

course this excludes the baptizing deacons.' Ambrose testifies that in his time 'deacons were not allowed to preach.'[1] According to the apostolical constitutions deacons could not preach but only read the gospels.[2] Archbishop Potter shows, that, according to the nature of their office, and the opinion of many of the fathers, deacons could neither preach nor baptize, as a part of their function.[3] Chrysostom says, that 'the deacons had need of great wisdom, although the preaching of the gospel was not committed to them. He shows that they could not attend to this and to the care of the poor also, and declares 'that, in his time, such deacons as the apostles ordained were not in the church.'[4] Jerome is very severe upon them, observing that he had seen some deacons sit among presbyters, and in domestic entertainments, pronounce benedictions on the presbyters.' 'Let them learn,' he says, 'who do this, that they act incorrectly, and let them hear the apostles, 'it is unfit, that, leaving the word of God, we should serve tables.' They should know for what purpose deacons are constituted. They may read the Acts of the Apostles, and remember their first condition.'[5] So also, in the eighteenth canon of the council of Nice, we read: 'Let the deacons abide in their own station, knowing that they are indeed the ministers of the bishop, but that they are inferior to the presbyters.' So also in the thirth-seventh canon of the fourth council of Carthage, 'Let the deacon know that he is the minister of the presbyter, as well as of the bishop.' This council also ordered that the deacon should be ordained by the bishop alone, '*on the ground that he was consecrated, not as a priest, but as a minister.*'[6] 'They were, in short, the servants and assistants of bishops and presbyters, or the bishops adjutants, to render all required services at his and their bidding.'[7]

We might refer to various additional testimonies, quoted

1) Comment. on Ephes. iv.

2) See in Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 209, lib. ii. c. 57. These apostolical Constitutions and Canons enjoin. 'The deacon must give nothing to any poor man without the bishop's knowledge and consent; evidently intimating that his business lay with the distribution of charity. If any be found sitting out of his own place, let the deacon reprove him, and let him be conducted to a proper place. Let the deacons take care that none whisper, sleep, laugh, nod, &c. After the catechumens and penitents have retired, let the deacons prepare for the celebration of the eucharist. Here the deacons are represented, not as an order of priesthood presiding, but rather as taking a subordinate charge of the external order and decorum of the church—such as would comport with a secular office.'

3) Ibid, pp. 227–232, 208, 209.

4) Hom 14, on Acts, 6.

5) Ep. to Evagrius.

6) See Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 239.

7) Ibid.

by Rutherford, in his 'Due Right of Presbytery'—such as Sozomen's, that the office of deacon was to keep the church's goods; Eusebius, that the care of the poor, and the keeping of the church and its vessels, were committed to the deacons; Ruffinus, that, when there was no presbyter present, the deacons might distribute the elements of the Lord's supper; but it is unnecessary. We merely state that the sixth general council of Constantinople, A. D. 620, acknowledged 'the scripture deacons to be no other than overseers of the poor, and that this was the opinion of the ancient fathers.' (Canon 16.) What a change, then, must notoriously have taken place, by this time, on the original constitution of the christian church. Neander, the illustrious German professor of church history, in his 'History of the Christian Church,' page 240, says: 'though many other secular employments were added to the original one, yet the fundamental principle, (the relief of the poor,) as well as the name of the office remained. In later times, (referring to Cyprian and Origen,) we still find traces of the distribution of alms being considered the peculiar employment of deacons.' To this testimony from antiquity may be added that of the reformed churches, of the Waldenses, of Wickliffe, of Tyndal, of Lambert, of Budæus, of the Lutheran church, of the Genevan church, of Calvin, of the Swiss churches, of the French protestant church, of the Belgic and the Dutch churches, and of the puritans and nonconformists.[1]

According to Bingham, the ordinary duties of deacons in the primitive church consisted in taking care of the utensils of the altar, receiving the oblations of the people, delivering them to the priest, reading aloud the names of benefactors, distributing the consecrated elements, and carrying them to the absent, directing the behavior of the people in church, attending on the bishops, and acting as their messengers and representatives in synod, sometimes keeping the doors during the celebration of divine service, inquiring after the poor, and acting as almoners to them, informing the bishop of misdemeanors, and in some cases acting as catechists.[2] 'It seems,' says Mr. Palmer, 'that for *many centuries*, the ordinary office of the deacon related rather to such duties as are now discharged by parish clerks and church-wardens, than to the higher parts of the ministerial office.'[3] 'It appears to me probable,'

1) See quoted in Lorimer, on the office of the deacon, ch. v.

2) Eccl. Antiq. B. ii. c. 20. Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 405. Thomassin Vet. et. Nov. Eccl. Disc. part i. lib. ii. c. 29–33. Also Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 240, &c.

3) Vol. ii. p. 405.

adds this writer, who is the organ and highest authority of the present high-church prelatists, 'that, in the West, deacons were often not ordained in the lesser churches. In England, at least, we find few traces of the order, as a distinct office, in parish churches.' Of this, he produces some remarkable proofs.[1]

## § 5. *The arguments for the prelatical theory of deacons answered.*

On what grounds, then, does the prelatic church venture upon the assertion that deacons constitute an order in the ministry, when it is so manifest, from scripture, antiquity, and present custom, that such is not the truth in the case? Some of them sustain this position, as Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Jeremy Taylor have done, by boldly denying that the institution mentioned in the sixth chapter of Acts, was the order of deacons at all, and affirming, contrary to all antiquity, and to what may be termed universal or catholic consent, that these men were appointed to a temporary and special purpose of managing the community of goods.[2] But this, it will be allowed, is a desperate remedy, which can only promise the death of the patient, and will not, we presume, be prescribed by any modern physician. The only refuge from the inevitable conclusion forced upon every impartial inquirer is, the fact that Stephen, one of these deacons, is found, soon after, addressing his ecclesiastical judges, in an able and cutting speech: and that Philip is represented as preaching, or, at least, explaining the scriptures, to the Ethiopian eunuch. But will any reasonable man say that these facts draw after them the conclusion that deacons were instituted to preach, as well as otherwise to assist the church. Was not Stephen full of the Holy Ghost, even before his ordination as deacon? Was it not two years after his appointment as deacon, before we read of his public defence?[3] Might he not, in the meantime, have been empowered to labor in the word and doctrine? But even as a layman, why might he not, when called in question for his faith and conduct, and accused before the Sanhedrim for blasphemy, defend himself and the truth as it is in Jesus? It is not said that Stephen was a minister, or that he either preached or baptized, and surely no sane man can conclude that because Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, made a noble defence and apology, when put upon his trial and

1) Ibid, pp. 406, 407.
2) See Dr. Bowden's Letters, 2d series. Letter vi. pp. 60, 64.
3) See Townsend's New Testament Arranged, vol. i. pp. 45, 56.

called upon by the high priest to answer to his charge, that, therefore, all deacons were instituted as an order in the sacred ministry, for the purpose of preaching? There is not even the shadow of proof in the fact stated, for this most illogical and unwarranted inference, which is plainly contrary to the explicit statements of scripture. Neither is there any greater strength in the alleged fact that Philip, another of these deacons, is afterwards spoken of as an evangelist, and as preaching. (Acts, 8: 5, and 21: 8.) This also occurred some two years after his appointment to the deaconship.[1] And what is the reasonable and necessary conclusion which every one would draw, on reading these passages? Just what they would draw, did they hear of any friend who had, some year or two before, been admitted to deacon's orders, that he was now officiating as a presbyter,—to wit, that in the meantime he had been ordained to the office of a presbyter. In like manner Philip, having used the office of a deacon well in the church of Jerusalem, had purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith. And the propriety of this elevation of a man so richly endowed, was made evident upon occasion of the persecution that arose at Jerusalem, on the death of Stephen, when all the officers of the church were scattered abroad, and when Philip was naturally commissioned to act, wherever he went, as an evangelist. As such, therefore, he could most warrantably preach and baptize, and as such is he spoken of in connection with his ministerial labors.

But, if this is not sufficient to obviate the groundless hypothesis of prelatists, let it be remembered that, in the beginning, as we have already proved, the commission of our Lord was of itself a sufficient authority and warrant for any man, properly endowed and called to the work by the inward moving of the Holy Spirit, to engage in the preaching of the word. 'Therefore,' we are told, 'they that were scattered abroad,' at this time, 'went,' all of them, 'every where preaching the word. Then Philip, as one of the number, either commissioned by the apostles, or thus inwardly called, 'went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them.' So that, at that time, as many of the fathers attest,[2] even laymen engaged in that work, which, when the church was organized, was confined to the regularly ordained ministry. But, as Stephen is distinctly called an evangelist, he must,

1) Ibid, vol. i. p. 75.

2) See B. i. ch. 3, § 3, and Spiritual Despotism, App. to § 4, pp. 433, 434. Eng. ed.

some time or other, have been commissioned as such by the apostles. And thus is there, in scripture itself, more than enough to overthrow the supposition, that, in direct contrariety to the statement of scripture, the ministry of the word constituted a part of the deacon's office.

§ 6. *The primitive, and modern prelatical deacon, entirely different, and prelacy, therefore, an innovation upon the apostolic polity of the church.*

Deacons, therefore, are not ministers of the word and sacraments. They have no spiritual jurisdiction or cure of souls. They are simply curators of the poor, and attendants upon tables and the temporalities of the church. They are not an order in the ministry, but ecclesiastical officers appointed for the express purpose of freeing the ministry from any unnecessary occupation and hindrance in the prosecution of their work. The present order of deacons, in prelatic churches, is not, in any essential particular, the same as that instituted by the apostles. The primitive deacons were officers in a particular church, and were always appointed to discharge their functions for the benefit of that congregation, and its bishops or presbyters exclusively; whereas, the modern deacon is connected with no one church in particular, but with an extensive diocese, and may even be transferred to some other and distant portion of the church. The primitive deacon was not regarded as in any measure partaking of the priesthood or ministry, but merely of the deaconship, whereas, the modern deacon is held forth as an order of the priesthood or ministry, and a necessary part of this sacred hierarchy. The primitive deacon was appointed for the very purpose of enabling ministers to give themselves wholly to the preaching of the word and to the church; whereas, the modern deacon is by custom universally authorized to preach, and to baptize, and otherwise to discharge ministerial functions. The office of primitive deacon was in itself complete, and in most cases permanent and final, and in its duties distinct, particular, and well-defined; whereas, modern deacons are a sort of nondescript ministers, who have no particular charge, no invariable and defined duties, no settled and permanent calling, and who are, in fact, mere expectants of some call, by means of which they may secure ordination as presbyters, and induction into some charge. Neither can any deacon ever become a presbyter without some such call.[1] In short, the primitive deacon had a local

1) See the Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

habitation and a name, and was found desirable and necessary in every church; whereas, as we have seen, the prelatic deacon has been displaced from many churches, through many ages, and is, at this time, except as a probationer under training for office, a useless order, for which, as Van Epen says, the church can find no practicable occupation.[1]

The declaration, therefore, in the Common Prayer Book, as understood by high churchmen, is contrary to the truth in the case. The first canon of the protestant episcopal church in this country is an encroachment, in the very face of scripture and antiquity, based on the mere authority of its framers. The episcopal theory of three orders, therefore, resting, as it does, upon the pillars of its three orders of ministers, is built upon the sand, and cannot be sustained by the impartial verdict of any enlightened man who will diligently study the scriptures and ancient authors; while presbyterianism must be admitted, in this view also, to be most carefully conformed to the apostolic and primitive churches.[2]

1) See quoted as above.

2) On this whole subject see Anderson's Def. of Presb. pp. 209–211. Henderson's Rev. and Consid. Edinb. 1706, pp. 5, 6, 8. Rutherford's Due Right of Presb. pp. 159, 174, where he fully meets every conceivable objection. Jus Div. Eccl. Regim. p. 175, &c. Brine's Wks. vol. iv. Rutherford's Plea for Paul's Presbytery, pp. 291, 292. Jameson's Sum of the Episcopal Controversy, p. 91, &c. Dr. Rice, in Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 564, &c. Bib. Repertory, 1835, p. 242, &c. Vidal's Mosheim's Commentaries, vol. i. See also a recent work, received since the above was written, On the Office of the Deacon, by the Rev. John G. Lorimer. Edinb. 1842.

# CHAPTER XII.

## THE ALLEGED PRELATICAL CHARACTER OF EPAPHRODITUS, OF TIMOTHY AND TITUS, OF JAMES, AND OF THE SEVEN ANGELS, EXAMINED AND DISPROVED.

We have now completed our examination of the scriptural claims of presbyters, and shown that, according to the instructions and practice of Christ and his apostles, they are divinely authorized to discharge every function which has been regarded as peculiar to prelates, and that they are, therefore, the highest order in the christian ministry. But before we can consider our way as perfectly cleared, there are several objections offered to this conclusion, on whose strength the advocates of the prelacy triumphantly build their cause. They affirm that there is manifest and clear warrant for the order of prelates, in eleven cases of prelatic episcopacy found in the New Testament. These are the cases of Timothy and Titus, of James, bishop of Jerusalem, of Epaphroditus, and of the seven angels of the seven Asiatic churches. These, therefore, we shall now proceed to examine, after which we shall attend to some other objections.

§ 1. *The claims of Sylvanus, Andronicus, and Junia, to be prelates, considered, and a general reply given to all such claims.*

In the above enumeration, we have not thought it necessary to particularize the claims of Sylvanus, Andronicus, and Junia, which last personage was no less than the wife of Andronicus, if we are to believe Chrysostom, Theophylact, and several other fathers, and also the Greek and Latin churches generally, which observe their festival as husband and wife on the 17th of May.[1] And yet, in the zeal of prelatists for

1) Calmet's Dictionary, vol. i. p. 793. Junia.

the enlargement of the apostolic college into something in the shape and dimensions of an order, even Junia, or, as some copies have it, Julia, is to be duly consecrated to the prelacy, and thus give legal succession to other female occupants of the apostolic chair.[1]

There is, however, one general reply to all these cases of alleged apostolicity, which will show that the efforts expended in sustaining their claims are but an idle waste of ingenuity and labor, and that is, they would all, even if established, be beside the case, and prove nothing. For, could evidence be produced that Christ had sent forth from time to time, five hundred apostles, what would this have to do with the establishment of the exclusive powers of prelates, as a permanent and standing order in the ministry. We must believe that it would have just nothing at all to do with it, since, as apostles, as we have abundantly proved, they could have no successors,[2] while, in their ordinary character of ministers, they are succeeded by presbyters, who are clothed with every ministerial function. Presbyters are, beyond controversy, a divinely instituted order of christian ministers. Presbyters are scriptural bishops, and have every episcopal function committed to them which can, in any reason, be pretended to. It is, therefore, impossible that scripture should announce to us another order of ministers different from bishops, to rule over bishops, and yet possessed of no other functions than those attributed to these same bishops. If, therefore, the persons above named, and the others referred to, were all elevated to the seat of the apostleship, they were thereby constituted extraordinary officers; they were adapted to the immature and unorganized condition of the church; they were endowed with supernatural gifts; they can have no successors; and they afford no precedent for the intended order of the church during its fixed, organized, and permanent condition. That order can only be deduced from the platform instituted by these extraordinary officers, and this we have proved to be the order of presbyterianism, in contrast to that of the prelatic hierarchy. But our supposition is entirely gratuitous, since there is nothing like evidence that any of these persons were constituted apostles, although Timothy and Titus, as evangelists, were endowed with extraordinary gifts, and employed in extraordinary duties.

It is allowed, even by episcopalians, that the organization

1) Her claims are advanced by bishop Onderdonk; See Bib. Repert. 1835. p. 255.

2) Chap. I, and Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. ix.

of churches on the prelatical theory, was adopted by the apostles only as it regards some of the churches, while others (as in the case of Philippi) were evidently left without the order of prelates. Now from this undenied and undeniable fact, we may deduce a strong argument against that interpretation which would erect Timothy and Titus into prelates, and found upon them the superstructure of a hierarchy, as the permanent order of church polity. Even on the supposition that presbyterian parity is the established order of the christian ministry, we can easily comprehend both the necessity and wisdom of the temporary delegation to these supernaturally endowed evangelists, of the work of a general superintendence and arrangement. But if we will suppose the apostles to have taken the same view with episcopalians, of the necessity and supreme importance of the hierarchy, to the preservation of unity, order, and truth, and the conveyance of divine grace in the sacraments, confirmation, and ordination, then it is not possible to account for the fact, that they failed to secure this source of such all-essential blessings, to all the churches erected by them. Either such an order was not conceived of by them, or else it was not regarded as of essential importance, or at all necessary for these ends. For, were it possible to secure such benefits through such an agency, there was every possible motive for its immediate appointment. The gospel, be it remembered, had very early spread itself through many distant provinces of the Roman empire, by means of the Jewish converts who were scattered abroad after the days of Pentecost, and the persecution which arose on the death of Stephen. These converts could have been but very imperfectly acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel, and would doubtless connect with it all their Jewish views and prejudices, to its great and serious detriment. The evils arising from this source, and of which we hear so much in the New Testament, must have rapidly increased in the twelve years during which the apostles confined their labors to the land of Judea. Paul did not enter upon his travels for two years subsequent to this time. Indeed, there can be but little doubt that, during this period, the errors which so afflicted the early church took their rise. Now, if, as is supposed, the apostles thus remained together to mature their plans, to unite and concentrate the authority of their decisions, and to afford access to the churches, when they did enter upon the work of travelling, we should most assuredly expect that, were prelates the divinely appointed sources of grace and order, and of unity and purity of faith, they would have been at once secured; not

for one or two places, but for all. And when we find that such was not the fact, and that up to the very latest period, and when writing to churches for the last time, these apostles hinted at no such order, we are constrained to repudiate the conclusion, drawn from isolated and extraordinary arrangements, in favor of a prelatic hierarchy.[1]

## § 2. *The alleged prelatical character of Epaphroditus examined.*

We proceed, therefore, to the first plausible case of scriptural prelacy, which is that of Epaphroditus.[2] Epaphroditus was probably one of the seventy, and therefore a presbyter, and his only pretension to the character of prelate is founded on the application to him of the term apostle, in its original and unofficial sense of *messenger*, when, as the messenger of the church at Philippi, he carried money to the apostle Paul, who was then in bonds.[3] We have already made it abundantly manifest, that the term apostle had a common and a peculiar signification, and that, in the former, it was applied, even by the fathers, to all officers of the church, and is descriptive of any servant or messenger.[4] In this sense the term is used in 2 Cor. 8: 23, where we read of 'the messengers of the churches,' who are carefully distinguished from Titus, who is called 'the partner and fellow-helper' of the apostle; and whose only errand was, not the preaching of the gospel, but the conveyance of funds.[5] This evidently was the meaning attached to the term here by the translators of our Bible, who were prelatists, and who took every occasion to make the original speak the language of prelacy. In the same sense is the term taken by our Lord, when he says, 'the servant is not greater than his Lord, nor he that is *sent* (αποστολος) greater than he that sent him,' where he argues from the general notion of a servant and a lord, or a messenger and him that sent him. Here, also, we have the testimony of our translators in favor of our views. Besides, there is no evidence whatever, and none certainly produced, to show that Epaphroditus had those qualifications, gifts, and calling, which were

1) See Burton's Inquiry into the Heresies of the Apost. Age, pp. 13–25; Lardner's Jewish Testim. ch. i; Mosheim's Comment.; Vaughan's Corruptions of Christianity, pp. 127, 130.

2) See lately adduced, with great inconsistency, by Mr. Goode; Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 64.

3) Phil. 2: 25, and 4: 18.

4) See Lectures on Apost. Succ. Lect. ix.

5) See objections well answered in Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 308.

essential to an apostle,[1] and it is with a peculiarly bad grace that prelatists, who have such a dread of any argument on this subject founded upon mere names, should build such a castle as the apostleship of a humble presbyter, upon the airy foundation of an ambiguous word. Neither would the theory, that Epaphroditus was an apostle, in any manner help out the failing cause of prelacy, since, were he an apostle, he never could be the fixed bishop or pastor of any single church, and therefore not of Philippi. Neither, as an apostle, could he have any successor in his office. And, even were he allowed to be bishop of Philippi, we know that the Philippians had other 'bishops and deacons,' so that Epaphroditus could have been at best no more than the president or moderator among these presbyter-bishops.[2] But we have said enough in refutation of a hypothesis which is disproved by one of the most esteemed among the advocates of the hierarchy.[3]

## § 3. *The alleged prelatical character of Timothy and Titus examined.*

It is, however, affirmed, with the most unblushing assurance, that Timothy and Titus were constituted ministers of an order distinct from, and superior to, bishops or presbyters; and that they were, therefore, diocesan prelates. So say the Romanists, as Bellarmine and Turrianus, who have violently thrown this objection in the face of protestants. And so also teach all prelatists, who, having caught from these enemies of the faith and order of the gospel, their poisoned weapons, have wielded them for the destruction of all the other reformed churches. But no such weapons can penetrate or injure us, since they must first transpierce the invincible word of God, which, as a weapon, is sharper than any two-edged sword, and, as a shield, able to repel every fiery dart, of weak and human device, and all vain and conjectural inferences from uncertain premises.

We, therefore, utterly deny that there is any sufficient evidence in God's word for this prelatic consecration of Timothy and Titus. In the first place, there is nothing there recorded of them, in their agency or their duties, to which presbyters, empowered as we have found them to be, were not competent, when duly authorized as they were by the

1) See Lectures on Apost. Succ. Lect. ix.

2) See Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 307

3) Mr. Dodwell, Dis. Cypr. p. 123, and Parcen, p. 138. in Pierce's Vind. part ii. p. 103.

apostles. Secondly, neither Timothy nor Titus are any where, in all scripture, declared to have been, in fact or design, bishops of Ephesus and Crete. Thirdly, it is on the contrary certain, that even in the second epistle addressed to Timothy, he is expressly denominated an evangelist, and that he was, therefore, as we have seen, a presbyter, 2 Tim. 4 : 5. Fourthly, it is also ascertained to be fact, that these individuals were continually travelling from place to place, and that they could not, therefore, be the located prelates of any one district.[1] Fifthly, as Mark was with Timothy, and Zenas and Apollos with Titus, there can be no reason to suppose, that, contrary to apostolic example and practice, they ever ordained alone. Sixthly, Timothy could impart no higher ordination than he had received, which was that of presbyters. He must have acted, therefore, as a presbyter, whether he ordained singly or conjointly with others. Seventhly, throughout all the epistles to Timothy and Titus, there is no mention whatever of any other ministerial officers, than presbyters or bishops, and the officers called deacons; and, therefore, if Timothy and Titus were set apart to a higher order, it was temporary, and not necessary to the regular constitution of any church. Eighthly, they who assert that Timothy and Titus were set apart in their extraordinary character, as the predecessors of a similar and standing order of prelates, must prove, not only that, as authorized by the apostles, they *might* have been such, but that they actually *were* so ordained and so regarded by the apostles, by themselves, and by the churches; which we are sure they never can. Ninthly, we object to the arguments by which the prelatic character of Timothy and Titus are sustained, that they lead to gross absurdities, and cannot therefore be sound. For if they were prelates, that is, resident bishops, because they ordained elders, then Paul and Barnabas were also resident bishops, Acts, 14 : 20, 23. If, again, they were resident bishops, because they instructed presbyters, then was Paul also resident bishop of Ephesus. Acts, 20 : 17. If, again, they were diocesan bishops because they were empowered to receive accusations against presbyters, though they had only power to *receive* them, but not to *decide* upon them alone;[2] then were the Corinthian presbyters also diocesan bishops, for they, and others also, as we have seen, were similarly empowered to proceed with spiritual censures, even to excommunication; (see 1 Cor. 5 : &c.[3])

1) See their journeyings sketched out in Corbet's Remains on the Ch. pp. 123, 124.

2) See Whitaker's Contr. 5. q. 1. c. 2. f. 16, in Owen's Plea. p. 21.

3) See Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 190.

And thus Paul, and every other apostle, may be demonstrated to have been each of them resident and diocesan bishops, while, like Timothy and Titus, they were in perpetual motion. Ninthly, the special and temporary nature of their work, is carefully mentioned; Timothy being required to oppose erroneous doctrines, and Titus to set in order the things that were wanting, that is, to complete the organization of the churches. 1 Tim. 1: 3; 3: 14, 15; 4: 13; and Titus, 3: 12.[1] Tenthly, the engagement of Timothy in this work, was not by consecration to it, nor as having his chosen field of labor at Ephesus, but it was by special request; 'I besought thee,' says Paul, to abide still,' or longer, 'at Ephesus,' while Titus was left behind, that, or 'until he could set in order the things that were wanting.' They were both, therefore, presbyters, empowered by special divine authority, to act according to the exigencies of the infant church.

Eleventhly, whatever prelatic consecration and authority Timothy received, must have been previous to the writing of the first epistle addressed to him, since it is in this epistle his prelatical consecration and character is supposed to be alluded to. Now it is universally agreed,[2] that this epistle was written before Paul's visit to Ephesus, of which it is alleged Timothy was prelate. But on this occasion, Paul formally enjoined upon its presbyters to continue to act as bishops, and to govern that church of which the Holy Ghost had constituted them the bishops, and all this without any allusion to the fact that, on prelatic principles, they were neither valid ministers, nor a valid church without prelates, but usurpers of the divine rights and prerogatives of that sacred order. If, on the other hand, Timothy was *subsequently* consecrated a prelate, then, of course, he might have been all that he is described in the first epistle, and yet not a prelate: while in the second epistle, there is nothing whatever on which any such pretension could be based.

Twelfthly, it is made certain that Timothy was a presbyter, who, being extraordinarily empowered, acted as an evangelist or vice-apostle in missionary labors, not only before the time of his alleged prelatic appointment, but also afterwards; for Timothy was, it seems, absent from Ephesus, when the second epistle was written, (Eph. 6: 21, 22,) and

1) 'That thou mightest further put in order the things which remained unarranged' Bloomfield, in loco. See Dr. Mason, vol iii. p. 204.

2) This is the opinion of Athanasius, Theodoret, Baronius, Sudor, Capellus, Grotius, Hammond, Lightfoot, Bp. Hall, &c. See Owen's Plea, pp. 25, 26.

therefore never could have been the resident prelate of Ephesus.[1] Thirteenthly, as evangelists, these presbyter-bishops, Timothy and Titus, occupied a more elevated, dignified, and important station than they would have done as located bishops; and their confinement, therefore, to the assigned places, would have been, in fact, a *degradation*, and not an elevation. It will be observed, that they were *besought* to remain, and left for a time only, and that, while there, they acted in their proper character of evangelists.[2] Fourteenthly, to know what standing and permanent ministers are essential and perpetual in the church, we are bound to look, not to the temporary and extraordinary powers granted to the first pioneer laborers in the uncleared wastes of heathenism, but to those orders instituted in the churches they organized; and in those directions these ministers received by divine inspiration for the prosecution of their work, and the perpetuation of the church. Now in the epistles both to Timothy and Titus, only presbyter-bishops and deacons are any where mentioned, and these, therefore, are all the officers that are permanent in the church.

Fifteenthly, that these presbyters were in their extraordinary character evangelists, duly authorized by the apostles, we know.[3] That they were ever afterwards ordained as prelates, we do not know, and let those who affirm it, give their proof. Sixteenthly, if Timothy was duly consecrated a prelate at Ephesus, and thus set apart as the successor of the apostle, and of course with independent delegated powers, how is it that the apostle still announces his intention of coming shortly to Ephesus himself; adding, that he gave these directions to Timothy, *only that, in case he should tarry long*, Timothy might know how to behave himself in the house of God. (See 1 Tim. 3: 14, 15, and 4: 13; 1 Tim. 5: 13; 1 Pet. 4: 15.) If Timothy and Titus were prelates, then the prelatic office must be subordinate to the apostolic, since these individuals continued in *subjection* to the apostles, and were in all things directed by them.[4] The office of the apostle, was either, therefore, superior to theirs, or it was extraordinary; and, in either case, the theory of the prelacy is overthrown.

Seventeenthly, as to the authority of the fathers for the

1) See the Divine Right of the Min. part ii. as above, and Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. pp. 202, 203.

2) Divine Right, &c pp. 70, 71.

3) This is admitted by Bp. Hall, Bp. Dounham, and all the episcopal men we have read, say the authors of the Div. Right of the Min. p. 71.

4) 2 Tim. 4: 9, 13, 21; Titus, 3: 12.

prelacy of Timothy and Titus, we have only to reply, that it is all built upon Eusebius, who ventures no further than to say (ιστορεται) '*it is so reported*,' while this report was based upon the fable-telling Clement, and Hegesippus, whose works do not survive to tell their own story.[1] However this may have been, Eusebius testifies, that the theory of the prelacy of Timothy and Titus had only acquired the strength of a *report* as late as the fourth century. And besides all this, the term bishop, when applied to them, may rather mean what the scriptures mean, which is a presbyter, than what the later fathers meant, which is a new species of ministerial office, generated in the lap of a corrupt church. 'Certain it is,' says Dr. Campbell,[2] 'that in the first three centuries, neither Timothy nor Titus is styled bishop by any writer.' That Jerome did not believe Titus to be the fixed bishop of Crete, is evident from what he says: 'Titus, after he had given some instruction to the churches of Crete, was to return again to the apostles, and to be succeeded by Artemas, or Tychichus, for comforting these churches in the absence of the apostle.'[3] Of the same opinion also was Chrysostom, when he said, 'it is questionable, if the apostle had then constituted Timothy bishop there, for he saith, "that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine."'[4] This whole argument for the prelacy of Timothy and Titus, and the seven angels, is of modern date, and was never anciently pleaded as authorizing the divine and specifically distinct office of bishops above that of pastor.[5]

Eighteenthly, let us suppose that Timothy was made by Paul bishop of Ephesus, it is still to be determined whether, as such, he could have any resemblance to our prelates, who are bishops of an indefinite number of churches. Timothy was only, as is affirmed, bishop of Ephesus. But in the time of Ignatius, there was at Ephesus only one church,[6] of which one church Ignatius was pastor.[7] Bishop Timothy, therefore, instead of being prelate, was no more after all, even *when duly consecrated and mitred*, than the pastor of a single city congregation. But again, presbyters, as appears from the epistles addressed to these officers, are bishops, and it was over

1) On this testimony of Eusebius, see Dr. Rice in the Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 586.

2) Lect. on Eccl. Hist. Lect. v. p. 87.

3) Proæm. in Titus.

4) Hom. 1, in Tim. in Jameson Fund. of Hier. p. 150. See also Smectymnuus, p. 51.

5) Pamhl. on Presb. No. 2, p. 56.

6) Ignatius Ep. ad. Ephes. pp. 20, 25. Voss. ed. and Ep. ced. Maym. p. 34.

7) So it is admitted by Bp. Burn, in Vindic. of the Ch of Scotland, p. 51, Apud. Owen, p. 30.

these, Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus over the hundred cities of Crete, were to exercise their jurisdiction. The office then to which, on the supposition we have made, they were appointed, was very clearly not that of a bishop or prelate, for these only oversee a species of officers who are below bishops. He who has oversight or jurisdiction over bishops is an archbishop, a bishop of bishops, and such, therefore, were Timothy and Titus, *on this theory*. They were not then prelates, exercising the functions of a *superior* order in relation to other orders having no such powers, but were archbishops, having authority over *coördinate officers of the* SAME ORDER, and differing from them only in their rank and station. For an archbishop is among bishops only *primus inter pares, noblissimus inter nobiliores*. If, then, Timothy and Titus were prelates, they were of the species of archbishops, and, of course, were of the same genus or order with their bishops, who were of the order of presbyters. And thus are we again brought to the certain and inevitable conclusion, that Timothy and Titus were of the same order with presbyters.

In no possible way, therefore, nor by any device or ingenuity of man, can Timothy and Titus be fashioned into the shape and proportions of prelates. Timothy and Titus were not apostles. If they were, where is the proof of it? Are they called apostles? no; never in a single case. It is indeed said, that Timothy is called an apostle in 1 Thes. 1: 1, compared with 1 Thes. 2: 6. But the apostle, in the second of these passages speaks of himself, as is customary with him, in the plural number. Timothy is not alluded to. Are they otherwise designated? Yes, the language of Paul is, 'Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *a brother*,' 2 Cor. 1: 1, and Col. 1: 1, where he carefully distinguishes between himself as an apostle, and Timothy, who was no more than a brother in the ministry of Christ.[1] Again, they were not apostles, because they are expressly denominated evangelists, who, as archbishop Potter allows, were presbyters, and, as all admit, were different from the apostles, as such, 2 Tim. 4: 6. Were they, then, so treated by the apostles, as to prove that they were regarded by them as on a perfect equality in office and in rank? The very contrary is the truth in the case. They were treated as inferior, subordinate, and as those who were to be charged, directed, and controlled. (See 1 Tim. 4: 18, and 4: 16, and 6: 13, 14; 2 Tim. 4: 1, 9, 13.) That Timothy and Titus were not apostles we prove, there-

1) See Barnes' Episc. Ex. p. 41, &c. Apostolic Ch. p. 87, &c.

fore, not only by the presumption arising from the want of any evidence for the contrary, but by the positive conclusion, arising from plain evidence that they were not. And with this conclusion primitive antiquity concurs, for, says Whitby, 'as to the great controversy, whether Timothy and Titus were indeed bishops, the one of Ephesus, the other of Crete, he could find nothing of this matter, in any writer of the three first centuries, nor any intimation that they bore that name.'

When it is gravely objected, that Timothy is authorized to 'charge some, that they teach no other doctrine;' and Titus to 'ordain elders in every city' — and, therefore, that they were prelates — surely a very large calculation must be made upon the credulity of men. For, whether we suppose that they were or were not prelates, inasmuch as there were other settled pastors in these churches, the directions in question lead to no such inference. And were there no other ministers at this time in these places, or in either of them? Then, of necessity, these directions must have been first given, if given at all, to Timothy and Titus, even as presbyters. And on the other hand, were there other ministers in these churches, then, as Paul wrote personally and officially to Timothy and Titus, as his own special agents in the matter, he gives his instructions to them personally, because, in so doing, he gave them to all. The apostle addresses to Timothy and Titus, just as exclusively, all that he inculcates in these epistles, respecting sound doctrine and the preaching of the gospel, as what relates to ordination.[1] If, therefore, the argument holds good in the one case, it is equally applicable in the other; which leads to a palpable absurdity, and, therefore, it is applicable to neither. Judas and Silas are styled prophets, and prophets were, as we have seen, presbyters, though extraordinarily gifted. But Judas and Silas were sent by the apostles to exhort and strengthen the brethren at Antioch, on just such an embassage as that given to Timothy and Titus. Indeed, they accompanied the apostles, as their fellow-laborers, to all the churches, and, therefore, on prelatic principles, Judas and Silas were prelates, though by all allowed to be presbyters.

And then, again, even were it clearly proved, that both Timothy and Titus were deputed as prelates, the former of Ephesus, and the latter of Crete; according to the rule laid down by Mr. Palmer, that 'if any rite even mentioned in scripture,' (and he includes under this head episcopacy,) 'was

1) 1 Tim. 4: 6–11, 16; ch. 5: ch. 2: 3, 14, 16, 22, 26; ch. 3: 14, 16; 17–23; ch. 6: 11, 21; 2 Tim. 1: 13; ch. 4: 1, 5; Titus, 2, and ch. 3: 1, 10.

not given by all the apostles, under the express sanction of the Holy Ghost, or not delivered *to all the churches* by the apostles,' then it must be recognised as designed only for temporary uses.'[1] But the appointment of such prelates, for all the churches, by all the apostles, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, cannot be pretended to, for it is allowed, that in many of them no such offices were placed. Consequently, allowing Timothy and Titus to have been prelates, they were appointed only for temporary uses, to meet the exigencies of these two countries.

Let the opinion of a learned and a candid episcopalian, on this argument, be now heard. 'From these observations,' says Dr. Nolan,[2] 'a just estimate may be formed of the force of the argument, deduced from the directions of St. Paul, in his epistles to Timothy and Titus. Whether they were addressed to them as possessed of a presidency and executive authority, among their co-presbyters; or, as bishops possessed of the despotic power of governing according to the rule and canon of their own good will and pleasure, a little attention to the true state of the primitive discipline, as formerly described by me, will free me from the trouble of deciding. Few persons, blessed with common sense, who will take the pains to look into those epistles of St. Paul, will be disposed to contend, that they were private manuals, addressed to those bishops, for their peculiar direction, for the ordination of presbyters and deacons. This concession being made, the pretext for prolonging the dispute would be at an end; had not the apostle laid it at rest by speaking of the presbytery and their laying on of hands;[3] thus recognising their right to perform the only ministerial act, by which bishops are distinguished from presbyters, according to the concession of the most determined admirers of the divine right of the hierarchy; and thus proving them the same, as far as it is possible to identify them by assigning them the same office.[4]

## § 4. *The alleged prelatical character of James examined.*

The next case of prelacy alleged to be found in scripture, is that of James, who is reputed to have been bishop of Jerusalem. That James was an apostle, we are willing to

1) See on the Church, vol. ii. p. 70 – 74.

2) Cath. Car. of Christ. pp. 222, 223.

3) 1 Tim. 4: 14.

4) See on this subject, also, Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. p. 484, &c., and on the contradictory view of prelatists upon it, see Pierce's Vind. part ii. p. 100.

admit,[1] and also, that he continued with the other apostles to reside at Jerusalem until their dispersion. It is also to be allowed, that fourteen years after his conversion, Paul found him and Peter and John at Jerusalem; but we are no more authorized, from this circumstance, to regard James as bishop of Jerusalem, than we are either Peter or John.

We are, however, referred to the history of the council held at Jerusalem, for triumphant proof of the prelatic character of James. But this argument is without any foundation whatever. That James presided on that occasion, is a mere gratuitous assumption, without any proof. And, supposing him to have in fact presided, there is no manner of proof, that he did so in any other character than as a temporary moderator or president. While on the other hand, there is positive proof, that the presbyters ('the elders') were associated in that assembly, on the ground of a perfect equality with the apostles, as members of the ecclesiastical council. The council was not ruled by the apostles. The questions before them were not decided by the apostles. The votes given were not confined to the apostles. The decree adopted was not sent forth in the name, or by the exclusive authority, of the apostles, and much less of James singly, but was issued in the general name of the apostles, and presbyters, and brethren, by whose authority Barnabas and Silas were commissioned to carry the decretal letter of the synod, and publish it to the churches. This primitive council, therefore, furnishes no warrant for the assumed prelacy of James, but, on the contrary, most manifestly contradicts and overthrows the entire theory on which it is made to rest.[2]

Neither is it possible to conceive, that one of our Lord's apostles could be the bishop of a particular church. The office of an apostle and of a prelate are entirely different in their nature, objects, and ends. The office of the apostles was extraordinary, temporary, imparted by an immediate divine call, endowed with supernatural gifts, having universal dominion, and was designed to lay the foundations of the church. The office of a prelate implies an ordinary and fixed charge, natural and spiritual, but no supernatural gifts, and has reference to one charge, and to the constant oversight of such a charge. To convert an apostle into a prelate

1) Some, however, think, that James was one of the 70. Bower's Hist. of the Popes, vol. i. p. 6. See Neander's Plant. of the Chr. Ch. ch. ii. pp. 2 – 8.

2) See these facts fully admitted and stated by Mr. Faber, in his Diffic. of Rom. B. ii. ch. iii. (5) pp. 286, 287, Eng. ed. See also Jameson's Sum of the Episcopal Controv. p. 71, and Dr. Mason.

would, therefore, be a degradation, and an utter annihilation, of his apostleship.[1] Besides, the church at Jerusalem was, as has been seen, under presbyterian government. For some twelve years the apostles resided there and governed it in common, as a presbytery. This is admitted by archbishop Potter,[2] and is undeniable. There was no inequality among them. They were all of one order, and they all coöperated and acted in concert. During this period it is most probable, that Peter acted as their president or moderator. Having thus presented a model for the imitation of other churches, as we must believe, under divine guidance; having ordained deacons to take charge of the temporalities of the church, and presbyters, who sat with them in council, and presided during their absence, to fill their places and permanently order and govern the church, they all dispersed themselves in various directions, as God gave them opportunity.[3] Now, that James may have continued in the region of Judea, and other neighboring districts, we do not deny. This is very probable. In this case he may, like Paul at Antioch, and John at Ephesus, have exercised an apostolic supervision of the whole region. But that he was ever settled down at Jerusalem, or any where else, as a fixed prelate, is an hypothesis completely subversive of his apostolic character. What he did as an apostle, he did by that apostolic power and right in which he can have no successor. And what he did thus accomplish, as an apostle, was altogether different from the functions of a diocesan prelate. Paul, we have seen, never interfered with the internal government of the churches, and never undertook to exercise any prelatic authority over them. Neither did James, as far as scripture informs us, ever interfere with that presbyterial discipline which he, in conjunction with the other apostles, had already established at Jerusalem. As an apostle, therefore, James was preëminent, singular, and unequalled, by any subsequent ministers; while as a bishop he was a presbyter, and sat in council with other presbyters.

Besides, were we to locate James at Jerusalem, seeing that he had already acted as an associated presbyter with the other apostles and presbyters for twelve years in that church, where is the evidence that he either would, could, or did, assume to himself sole jurisdiction, and appropriate to himself the exclusive power of confirmation, (!!) ordination, excommunication, &c. Doubtless, when in Jerusalem, he would act

1) See Lect. on the Apost. Succ. Lect. ix.

2) On Ch. Govt. c. 3, p. 107, Eng. edition.

3) See Pierce's Vind. of Presb. Govt. partii. p. 42.

as the president or moderator of the presbytery, the προεδρος, προκαθημενος, and receive all reverence for his apostolic dignity. But he might do all this, and in nothing contradict presbyterian parity, while in every thing essential he would differ from a prelate. In short, James might act as presiding bishop, among the other presbyter-bishops, and yet have no manner of affinity to a prelatical bishop. Neither *could* he have any, as long as he stood related to scripturally constituted presbyters; since these, as we have seen, possessed every power and function which can devolve upon any permanent minister in the church, and would, therefore, leave no room for the introduction of a modern prelate. There is literally, nothing in scripture to substantiate the claims of prelatists in reference to James, but every thing to show their absurdity and futility. We are, however, referred to the fathers, and to their testimony to his prelatical character, in order to supply this sad deficiency of scriptural proof. But when we follow prelatists, even here we find the ground hollow and the foundation sandy. Every thing is derived from what is said by the two early writers, Hegesippus and Clemens, from whom Eusebius and all others, confessedly derive their testimonies. So that if *their* account of the matter is insufficient, it can derive no strength from continual repetition. Now both these writers will be found to be entirely destructive to the prelatical theory. As for Clemens, he testifies, that, 'after the ascension of our Lord, Peter, James, and John, the most honored by our Lord, would not yet contend for THE FIRST DEGREE OF HONOR, but chose James the just, bishop of Jerusalem,' or as Ruffinus reads it, 'bishop of the apostles.'[1] This relates, it will be observed, to that period when the apostles governed the church as a presbytery. It refers only to an office among the apostles, as such. It was merely a degree of dignity, to which all felt themselves entitled. It implied no superiority of order or jurisdiction; otherwise, James was made a higher order than that of apostle, and was a pope over the rest. This, the other Clemens actually makes him, calling him 'prince of bishops, who by his episcopal authority commanded all the apostles.'[2] And yet, even as late as the time of Cyprian, he, with sixty-eight other bishops, could in council declare, '*neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se esse episcoporum constituat*,' neither does any among us constitute himself a bishop of bishops. And Burnet allows that the whole frame of metropolitans and patriarchs is taken from the division of the

1) Hist. l. ii. c. 2.

2) Recognit. l. ii.

Roman empire,[1] and that the term archbishop was not used in the first century.[2] So that, even allowing the testimony of Clemens, it will prove nothing more than that James was chosen president or moderator of the presbytery at Jerusalem. But there is no faith to be put in the testimony at all, since Eusebius derived it from no certain or correct source.[3]

Hegesippus is of no more service, since he only says, that James ruled the church of Jerusalem, μετα των αποστολων, *with, or in company with, the apostles.* This, therefore, would fully substantiate our position, that the apostles governed this church for many years as a presbytery, and as a model of presbyterian polity. But prelatists, after Jerome, would translate this 'after the apostles.' This, however, is bad grammar, and implies that James, who was martyred while all the other apostles were still alive, (except the second James,) was living *after they were dead.* But even allowing him the benefit of a resurrection, the words do not teach that he was made prelate, but only that he ruled the church, that is, presided over it, and this he might do as a presbyter, since it was a part of the office and function of presbyters to rule. There is, therefore, no help to be found for the prelacy of James in the fathers, since these fountains of all authority are uncertain and fabulous, and, if admitted, utterly subversive of it, one ancient author making him a universal bishop, like the other apostles, while Epiphanius enrols him among the first bishops of Rome.[4] Alas, for the glorious uncertainty of the fathers!

The further hearing of this case may, therefore, be well suspended until some one rises from the dead to give evidence in the case; for, till then, who can believe, when Moses and the prophets leave us unguided and untaught,[5] and since, if we ask wisdom even from prelatists, our ears are stunned with their discordant opinions.[6]

1) Vind. of Ch. of Scot. p. 172.

2) Ibid, p. 187.

3) So allows Valesius, a learned Romanist. See Baxter's Diocesan Churches, p. 70.

4) See Baxter's Diocesan Churches, p. 71; Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 319; Dr. Rice in Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 597.

5) On this case see Baxter's Diocesan Churches, London, 1682, p. 70, &c.; Dr. Rice in Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 596, &c.; Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 310–319; Jameson's Sum of the Episcopal Controv. p. 74.

6) Some of them earnestly contend, this James was not the son of Alpheus, or one of the twelve. So Dr. Scott, p. 394; Bp. Taylor, Episc. Assert. pp. 16, 70, 71. The inconvenience of the former notion is apprehended by others, who earnestly contend, this James was the son of Alpheus, and one of the twelve. This way goes Bp. Pearson, Lect. in Acta, p. 58; Bp. Usher. Prolegom. in Ignatium, c. 16; Dr. Whitby, pref. to the Epistle of James; Dr. Cave, Life of St. James; Mr. Dodwell, Diss. in Irenæum, in præf. and Paræn. p. 18. But then Dr. Barrow's argument is directly contrary to this notion; for he contends, an apostle could not become a bishop, P. Suprem. pp. 82–84. See Pierce's Vind. of Presb. Ord. part ii. p. 100.

## § 5. *The alleged prelatical character of the seven angels of the seven churches examined.*

We are now to examine into the claims preferred for the prelatic order of the angels of the seven churches of Asia Minor, spoken of in the book of Revelation. Now these claims may be refuted by an examination of the circumstances of the case, and of the epistles themselves. As it regards the circumstances of the case, let the following remarks be attentively considered. St. John, it is to be remembered, lived to the very close of the first century of the christian era, and touched, as it were, the beginning of the second.[1] He continued at Ephesus to the very time of Trajan, about one hundred years after Christ.[2] Clemens Alexandrinus relates, that 'St. John, being returned from his banishment at Patmos, went about the country near to Ephesus, both to form and settle churches, where he saw occasion, and to admit into THE ORDER OF THE CLERGY such as were marked out to him by the Spirit.'[3] It was during this period, and while the apostle was yet alive, that the epistles in question were sent through him, by Christ.[4] They must, therefore, be understood in accordance with this fact.

Now it has been shown, that the only standing and permanent officers appointed in the churches by the other apostles, were bishops or presbyters, and deacons. Timothy and Titus were extraordinarily endowed ministers, employed by the apostles on temporary and extraordinary business, and there is no ground for supposing that any permanent order, having similar powers or functions, were instituted. For such there is no name, no commission, no description, no qualifications, no directions, in all their epistles. In all the churches, as in Jerusalem, Ephesus, Antioch, Corinth, &c., the apostles ordained and settled a plurality of presbyters, but no prelates. Now where is the proof, that when these other apostles were dead, John altered this plan, and introduced a new order of ministers into the church? Or how can we imagine, that Christ, having raised up the apostles for the very purpose of permanently organizing and founding the churches, would have left the most important part of its entire polity to the last surviving apostle? Scripture nowhere inti-

1) See Burton's Bampton Lect. p. 3.

2) Wake's Apost. Fath. Prel. Disc. § 14, p. 10.

3) Clem. Alex. de Divit. Salv. num. xii.; Euseb. Eccl. Hist. B. iii. c. 23.

4) Wake, as above, p. 11.

mates such a change. History makes no mention of it. None of the ancient churches, councils, or doctors, have ever attributed such an institution to John; while Dr. Hammond, and all his followers, maintain that prelacy did not commence till after the close of scripture, which was about the period of John's death.[1] We conclude, therefore, that the apostle John could not have made any change in the order of the church, and that these epistles must be understood in accordance with the presbyterian model erected by the other apostles.

Let us now suppose, with most prelatists, that the system of prelacy had been established by Christ and his apostles as the permanent order of the church. It must have occupied the same prominence in the view of christians then, that it does with prelatists now; and have called forth the same earnestness in holding it forth to view, and in proclaiming its importance. Now, in contrast with these reasonable expectations, to pass by at present the other apostles, let St. John be heard giving his testimony in the case; let him be heard, in all his epistles, calling himself a presbyter, and identifying himself with presbyters as the permanent order of the ministry; let him be heard describing the ministry of the church triumphant under the same order of presbyters, and nowhere distinctly announcing the system of the prelatic hierarchy; and who can resist the conclusion, that he knew nothing of it; that these epistles, which are obscure, must be, therefore, misconceived by prelatists; and that their assumption that they speak of prelates must be utterly groundless.

Again, when these epistles were written, John was yet alive. Now it is a continual argument with prelatists, that during their lives, the apostles retained in their own hands the government of the churches over which they presided.[2] In this way is it attempted to account for the presbyterian character of the churches already alluded to. Now this argument will work both ways. And as it would prove that Timothy and Titus could be nothing more than the curates or deputies of Paul, so will it also show that these seven angels, being placed in those very churches over which John presided, and which he continued to visit and to order till his death, were nothing more than presbyters, since John was still their prelate, and of course could not have seven other prelates in the same diocese. We thus perceive, even on

1) See Baxter's Episc. part ii. pp. 135, 136.

2) See Stillingfleet, Unreas. Sep. part iii. § 13; Bilson's Perpet. Govt. of the Ch. 'While the apostles lived, it is probable there were no fixed bishops.'

acknowledged prelatical principles, the utter absurdity of the attempted argument from these seven angels.

But it may be said, that Paul and John were both archbishops, and that these persons were still prelates under *their* oversight. This, I know, has been alleged,[1] and is the only sensible plea which can be offered. But it is equally fatal to the whole system of prelacy. For it is universally admitted, that archbishops and bishops do not differ as to order, but only as to the extent of their jurisdiction. They are one and the same in order. These seven angels, therefore, as also Timothy and Titus, were one and the same in order with the apostles, that is, in their ordinary ministerial character. But these apostles, it has been proved, were, in their ordinary character, presbyters; and so also, therefore, were Timothy, Titus, and these seven angels. Prelates they could not be, because this would involve the inadmissible supposition, that there were many prelates in one and the same limited diocese; and the equally contradictory fact, — we mean on prelatic principles, — that as these angels were the fixed pastors of single churches, the original bishops were nothing more nor less than parochial bishops, that is, presbyterian pastors. And, as if to show the baselessness of the prelatic hypothesis about these angels, by the endless confusion and contradiction to which it leads, John, we are told, made Polycarp bishop of Smyrna,[2] and this same Polycarp was universal bishop,[3] that is, a local preacher was a universal bishop or primate, and that, too, while his universal bishop was alive. To the same gross absurdity we are also brought by the opinion advocated by certain learned men, that these cities were metropolitan cities, and their bishops metropolitan bishops. Of course, this never could afford any proof for the divine institution of prelates, since there might be metropolitans over a number of presbyterially organized churches; but in constituting them metropolitans, what are we to make of John? and who can swallow the camel of metropolitan churches at that period of christianity?[4] Presbyters, therefore, as we hold the office, will answer all the representations and difficulties in the case, and harmonize the whole. And that our views are correct, is most clear from the testimony of Clemens, already adduced, since he distinctly says, that the apostle 'went about the country both to form and settle churches,

1) E. g. in God's Govt. of his Church. Lond. 1641, p. 33.
2) Archbishop Wake's Apost. Fath. pp. 241, 242, Eng. ed. Bagster.
3) Ibid, p. 241.
4) See Jus. Div. Min. Angl. part ii. p. 81.

and to admit INTO THE ORDER OF THE CLERGY, such as were marked out to him by the Spirit,' where he evidently recognises only one order of the sacred office, according to our principles.[1]

So much for the circumstances of the case. Let us now look into the book itself. The whole argument for the prelacy of these personages depends on the use of the term angel. Now it must be evident to every one, who will for a moment consider, that no argument for the divine authority of an order of ministers, distinct from and superior to others, can be drawn from the use of a term, which is in itself unquestionably mystical; which occurs in the most mystical and therefore obscure book of scripture; and which has received the most various interpretations, in all ages, and by divines of every portion of the church. To make this word a proof of the existence of prelates in those churches, is not to argue from what is known to what is less known, but to prove *ignotum per ignotius*, and thus to authenticate what is itself doubtful, by what is perfectly indeterminate.[2]

The term angel, as Augustine, in his homily on the words 'I will remove thy candlestick,'[3] supposes, and as Ambrose, Aretas, and others, also teach,[4] may be taken collectively as symbolical of the whole church, in its visible and organized form; for as these epistles are in the beginning addressed to the *angel* of the church, so are they, in the conclusion, addressed to *the churches*. (Rev. 22:16.) To the churches, also, does St. John direct the entire book. (Rev. 1: 4, and 10: 11, and Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17.)[5] The term, therefore, may well refer to all the authorized ministers in these churches, regarded as united in one government. There is an evident adaptation in the form of the address throughout these epistles, to this construction of their meaning. (See ch. 13: and ch. 17.) Thus, in Rev. 2:24, it is written, 'but unto *you* I say, and unto the *rest* in Thyatira.' (So Rev. 2:10, 13, &c.) And thus, in the contents of our authorized Bible, which was translated and arranged under prelatic direction, the angels are said to be 'THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCHES.'[6]

Besides, we are assured, that, in the Ephesian church,

1) See in Wake's Prel. Disc. p. 31.

2) Div. Right of the Min. part ii. p. 75; Theologia Symbolica non est argumentativa.

3) See in Wks. vol. x. hom. xi. in Apoc. and also de doctr. Christ. lib. iii. p. 30.

4) Ambrose, in Apoc. in Anderson's Defence, pp. 128, 131. Also, Primasius, Haymo, Bede, in ibid, p. 135; and Dr. Hammond, p. 134.

5) See Anderson's Defence, pp. 130–134; Div. Right of the Min. p. 77.

6) See chap. ii. Contents.

there were several presbyters, (see Acts, 20.) as we have already seen; and that there were such also in the other churches will be granted. Now these presbyters must be referred to, either under the term candlestick, and thus be classed among the laity, or under the terms stars and angels, especially as these are described as *the angels* of the seven churches, not the seven angels of the seven churches. (Rev. 1:20.) Again, the term angel, as is generally allowed, is a term expressive of office, and not of order; and, therefore, it alone cannot determine the order of the individual, or individuals, to whom it is applied. If it is said, these angels were officially empowered to rule, let it be remembered, that the apostle gives the teaching minister precedence over him who ruled; (1 Tim. 5:17;) and that in this very book the presbyters, by whom we are to understand, as archbishop Potter teaches, the ministry of the church, are represented as next the throne of Christ, while the angels are placed further off. But further, it is believed by chronologists, that Timothy was alive when this epistle was addressed to the church of Ephesus; and are we to believe, that Timothy is the individual here so severely rebuked?[1] It would also appear, that Antipas, the minister at Pergamos, had been, at this time, martyred, and that, therefore, there could have been no bishop there.

Again, it is to be observed, that the apostle John never once, either in this book, or in his gospel or epistles, uses the term bishop, while he does employ that of presbyter, and twice calls himself a presbyter. Neither does he ever intimate, that there is any superiority in one minister over another, but on the contrary, he severely chides Diotrephes, who had ambitiously assumed some such superiority. It must, therefore, be made very clear, before we can believe it, that, in self-contradiction, the apostle does here formally recognise a higher order of ministers, and make himself an archbishop. Nay, in this very book, the term angel is used indubitably as a collective noun, signifying not any one individual, nor any one order of individuals, but a human ministry, in general, (Rev. 14:6.) 'While it looks, therefore, somewhat uncivil,' to use the words of Dr. Mason,[2] 'to contradict the positive assertion of prelatists, that these angels were prelates, we must contradict it; for it is not true. And if, in proving it to be false, we prove its authors either to be ignorant of the

1) See Div. Right of the Min. p. 78.

2) See Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. pp. 146–149.

scriptures, or wilfully to misrepresent them, we cannot help it. One passage, from the book of Revelation itself, overturns the very foundation upon which Cyprian and his associates have reared their 'absolute demonstration.' I saw, says the prophet, another ANGEL fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to EVERY NATION, and KINDRED, and TONGUE, and PEOPLE, (Rev. 14: 6.) Heaven, in this book, is the ascertained symbol of the christian church, from which issues forth the 'ministers of grace' to the nations. As the gospel is preached only by men, this angel, who has it to preach to 'every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,' must be the symbol of a human ministry. And, as it is perfectly evident, that no single man can thus preach it, but that there must be a great company of preachers to carry it to 'every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,' the angel mentioned in the Revelation is, and of necessity must be, the symbol of that great company. We might produce other examples, but this is decisive. It shows the proposition of Potter and Cyprian, &c., to be one of the most rash and unfounded assertions into which the ardor of party ever betrayed a disputant. Assuming it now as proved, that the term 'angel' is applied in this book to a collective body, or a number of men joined in a common commission, we demand the reason of its being restricted to an individual, in the epistles to the churches of Asia. Signifying 'a messenger,' it is, in itself, as applicable to any preacher of the gospel, as to a diocesan bishop. If he was of old, what most of the diocesans are now, he was, of all the clergy in his diocese, the one who had the least claim to the title. To preach the word, to declare the whole counsel of God, to instruct the people, we are told, plainly enough, are not the peculiar attributes of the bishop. By what rule of propriety should he be characterized by symbols which are foreign from his appropriate functions? By symbols which describe exactly the functions of those ministers whom, we are taught, they do not represent.'

If we will allow ourselves to be directed, in this inquiry, by the meaning attached to this phrase, 'angel,' in the Jewish church, (and it is very natural to suppose that the apostle would employ it in its current and understood sense,) then there can be no reasonable doubt, that, by the term angel, we are to understand either the presbyters collectively, or their presiding officer, or moderator, to whom this name was applied, in the order of the Jewish synagogue. There was, as

Lightfoot and others have shown, a public minister in every synagogue, called the angel of the church, or bishop of the congregation. This officer was an ordinary minister of one particular synagogue, and nothing like a diocesan prelate; and as the term in question is employed in reference to the very subject before us, and as applicable to that very synagogue service from which the christian forms are confessedly in great part drawn, until sufficient reason can be shown that it is here used in another sense, we must feel abundantly justified in rejecting every other, and retaining this.

But it is to be still further urged, as a plain refutation of the prelatic character of these angels, and in proof of the position that they were congregational ministers, and not diocesan prelates, that the stars are represented as fixed in their several candlesticks, and therefore as parochial bishops, and not prelates. Take them at their very best estate, therefore, and it is impossible to magnify the proportions of these angels into diocesan bishops. Even in the fourth century there were no more christians at Ephesus than could meet in one church, or, at most, in two.[1] So also, as Ignatius informs us, the church at Smyrna ordinarily worshipped and communicated in one church, even in his time.[2] The same is shown by Ignatius to have been the case with the church at Philadelphia, and elsewhere. With what face, then, can it be pretended, that these angels were prototypes of existing diocesan bishops, with their dioceses of indefinite extent, embracing an indefinitely large number of churches, when they were no more, supposing them to be individuals, than the presiding officers of their several presbyterial churches? They were, in fact, parish ministers, and not diocesan prelates. Dioceses there were none for two hundred and sixty years after Christ, and, of necessity, there could be no diocesans, nor any officers tantamount to prelates. Let it then be acknowledged, as Beza has said, that by these angels were meant the presidents, in the several presbyteries connected with these seven churches, and how will this advantage the cause of prelacy? In no manner or degree. Such presidents we believe to have existed in the apostolic churches, and to have had other presbyters associated with them, as well as seniors or elders, and deacons, in proportion to the extent and demands of their parish. But where the church was small, there the president would be found without any other pres-

1) See Owen's Plea, p. 30, and Clarkson's Prim. Episc.

2) See shown in Owen's Plea, p. 33, and Clarkson, and in B. ii. ch. ii.

byters, as in the case of Gregory Thaumaturgus. Now such presidents are our presbyterian pastors, and our moderators. Our existing pastors and moderators are clothed with all the powers, and discharge all the duties, of these apostolical and primitive presidents. But, that these angels were more than this, cannot be proved. *Where* is it proved? Where are they said to be of an order distinct from and superior to presbyters? In what epistle are they said to possess or to exercise the sole power of jurisdiction, or of ordination? When Christ gave his promises to Peter, did he not do it in the name of the rest of the apostles, as Cyprian, Augustine, Jerome, Optatus, and others say,[1] and not as implying any preëminence or lordly supremacy in Peter? And when he directs his epistles to the churches of Asia, to the angels of those churches, by what logic are we to conclude that these angels, if individual personages, were of a superior order to their fellow-angels, or any thing more than the presidents of these churches? This whole argument is a mere *petitio principii*, a begging of the question, and, when forced to its utmost limits, is favorable to presbytery and not to prelacy.

Neither can prelatists discover any solid ground on which to build their vain hypothesis. They are, therefore, found to contradict, gainsay, and refute one another, and thus prove the futility of their scheme. 'We see,' says Stillingfleet, 'what miserable, unaccountable arguments those are, which are brought for any kind of government, from metaphorical, or ambiguous expressions, or names promiscuously used.'[2]

1) See Reynold's Confer. with Hart, c. 4, § 3, ad finem.

2) See the very strong language of archdeacon Mason, in Vind. of the Ref. Ch. pp. 173–176, in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 98, 99. On this whole argument, see, as above, Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, part ii. § 5, pp. 140, &c. 154, 155. Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 351, &c. Pierce's Vind. of Presb. Ordin. part ii. p. 103. Dr. Rice in Evang. Mag. vol. x. p. 594. Jameson's Cyprianus Isot. p. 449. Baxter on Episc. pp. 69, 70. Smectymnuus, pp. 52–59. Milton's Prose Wks. vol. i. p. 187, &c. Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. ch. ix. pp. 479–484.

# CHAPTER XIII.

## THE ALLEGED PRELATICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH CHURCH EXAMINED AND DISPROVED.

### § 1. *The argument, founded upon the prelatical character of the Jewish hierarchy, examined.*

Having thus disposed of the objections urged by prelatists against the presbyterian system, founded upon the alleged existence of certain prelates in the apostolic churches, we now proceed to notice some other objections.

There is no argument more strongly urged by prelatists, than the analogy between their hierarchy and that of the Jewish church. 'There were then three orders of priests in the Jewish church; there was the high priest, and the sons of Aaron, and the Levites.'[1] The Levites are thus made to correspond to the order of deacons — the priests to that of presbyters — and the high priest to that of prelates. This was probably the favorite argument with ancient prelatists.[2] Certain it is, that it is the main stay, the corner-stone of the popish hierarchists.[3]

Now, on this argument, we remark, First, it is absurd. To infer the character of the christian ministry from an abrogated priesthood, is surely an absurdity, which might well have been left to an age of darkness.[4] Speaking of this

1) See Dodwell's One Altar, Beveridge's Cod. Can. Ecc. Prim. Vind. Lib. ii. c. 11, § 11. Burnet's Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 52. Potter on Ch. Govt. pp. 48, 49, Am. ed. Wks. of Rev. W. Jones, of Nayland, vol. iv. p. 355. See also Saravia on the Priesthood. Dr. Monro's Inquiry, p. 27. Sage's Vind. of Cypr. Age, ch. ix. § 4, &c.

2) See Epiphanius. Hær. xxix. § 4, in Wilson, p. 145.

3) Bellarmine de Cler. cap. 14. Tileni Parænesis. cap. 2. On this basis is erected the supremacy of the pope. See this very fully illustrated, in Jameson's Cyprianus Isot. pp. 178, 183, 184, 264, 273, 275.

4) See Letters on the Fathers, p. 3, by an Episcopalian.

argument, Dr. Nolan says:[1] 'But as analogical proofs, however ingenious and pretty, in the way of illustration, supply but pitiful substitutes for argument, I must be pardoned for passing them over without a further expression even of my contempt. It will suffice to observe upon this subject at present, that they are so little conclusive, in establishing the required similarity, that opinions, as wide as those which they pretend to reconcile, are held as to the objects which they undertake to assimilate, so little apparent is the resemblance. They are thus cited, with equal justice and confidence, by those who suppose the government of the church committed to presbyters or bishops.' Secondly; this argument proves too much for anglican prelates. Since, if it proves any thing, it will prove the supremacy of a single head over the whole church, with temporal jurisdiction also, and not the existence of an order of prelates, each of whom claims independent jurisdiction. But this destroys the supreme headship of Christ, and must therefore be rejected.[2] It would prove, also, not three orders, nor even seven, but something like thirty-one; since, under the Jewish hierarchy, there were 1. Levites. 2. Heads of families over them. 3. Rulers, or the chief of the heads. 4. over them, Ithamar. 5. over both priests and Levites, Eleazer. 6. over all, the high priest.[3] The priests were divided into the several orders of Katholickon; the seven Immarcalim; the Gizbarim; overseers, of whom there were fifteen orders, and presidents. So, also, the Levites were divided into the templar levites, porters, singers, musicians, treasurers, provincial levites, &c.[4]

Thirdly, this argument has led to great and serious evils. This idea being once introduced, drew after it other errors. It led to the monopolizing of all power by the clergy; to the exclusion of the laity from all ecclesiastical rights; to the doctrine of sacramental efficacy, ritual formality, and ceremonial purification; to the doctrine of a priesthood; sacrifices, altars and penances; absolutions, jubilees, and indulgences;

1) The Cathol. Char. of Christ'y. pp. 238, 239.

2) See, under argument fourth, this position made good by further arguments.

3) See Stillingfleet, Iren. part ii. ch. iii. p. 172. Archbishop Usher says, also, (The Original of Bishops and Metropolitans, briefly laid down. Printed 1703, in Scott's Coll. of Tracts. Lond. 1814, 4to. vol. xii. p. 268,) 'that the priests were superior to the Levites, no man doubteth; and that there was not a parity, either betwixt the priests or betwixt the Levites themselves, is manifest, by the word of God; wherein mention is made of the heads and rulers, both of the one and of the other, 1 Chron. 24: 6, 31, and Ezra 8: 29.

4) See Lewis's Origines Hebrææ or Antiq. of the Heb. Republic. Lond. 1774, vol. i. B. ii. c. 5 and 12.

to the entire ritual of popery, into which was incorporated the great mass of the Mosaic; to the spiritual despotism of popery; to the national establishments of christianity: to the system of tithes; and to the secular aggrandizement of the clergy.[1] These and other pestiferous evils, which have so deformed and corrupted the church of God, may be all traced to this original fountain of bitterness and death.[2] The theoretical and practical evils to which these notions of a theocracy gave rise, lasted through many centuries, and, with the exception of the scattered witnesses of the truth in each century, were first opposed by the pure light of genuine christianity, diffused by the reformation.[3]

Fourthly, this argument utterly fails. The analogy is not sustained. The high priest was not an order distinct from the priests, but was a single individual and himself a priest: while the Levites were not in sacred orders at all, no more than our church sextons now are. The scriptures speak of the whole priesthood, high priest and all, as one order.[4] Aaron, therefore, and Eleazer, who succeeded him, are never styled, in the books of Moses, any thing but priests. Neither was the title of high priest given exclusively to one person, but also to the chiefs of the twenty-four courses of priests.[5] The high priest was admitted to his office without any ordination by which a new order might be conferred. The high priest did not ordain the inferior priests, nor were these made to depend for orders upon him. The high priest did not confirm the people. In case of the pollution of the high priest, a common priest officiated in his stead.[6] Neither was the supreme and exclusive right of government and jurisdiction committed to his hands. The high priesthood, therefore, instead of being a representation of the prelatic order, was, as if by design, so constituted as to overthrow the essential powers and prerogatives claimed by this order: while, on the other hand, this order of prelates has no manner of resemblance to the high priesthood in those things, by which it was cardinally distinguished.[7] Besides, Aaron and his sons were the princes of their tribe, so that their eminence arose, not

1) See Mendham's Venal Indulgences and Pardons of the Ch. of Rome, p. 10. See also Milton's Reason of Ch. Govt. B. i. ch. iii. Wks. i. p. 90, &c.

2) See Campbell's Lect. on Eccl. Hist. L. x. part i. Gibbon's Decl. and Fall, vol. i. ch. xv. See how it is employed by Whitgift, Def. p. 220, in Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 191, and by Parker, in ibid. p. 193, or in his Acct of the Govt. of the Chr. Ch. § 14.

3) Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 197.

4) Numb. 18: 1. Heb. 7: 11, 12.

5) Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, B. i. c. 5, and Mark 14: 1.

6) Ibid.

7) Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iii. p. 80. Milton's Reason of Ch. Govt. B. i. ch. iv.

from their office, but was brought into their office. And hence, the priests were not chosen as are modern prelates, from among the whole number of the Levites, but inherited their dignity, and were, by birth, priests. So that, unless we will allow prelacy to run in the blood, and to proceed by hereditary succession, it can find no countenance in the Jewish priesthood.[1]

There is another line of argument, by which the entire failure of the asserted analogy between the Aaronic hierarchy and the prelatic hierarchy, especially as it is developed in the papal domination, is demonstrated. The Aaronic hierarchy rested on the broadest basis of scriptural authority; upon direct proof of its divine institution; upon explicit and formal affirmation, that the Aaronic authority descended to his successors in the same office; and upon undeniable evidence that this bequeathed authority was, *in fact*, transmitted to the successors of Aaron. Now, as the consequences involved in the prelatic theory are, to say the least, as important as those depending upon the Aaronic supremacy, we must look for equally clear proof of its divine institution. But this sovereignty, immeasurably more vast in its consequences, its geographical extent, and its duration, is entirely destitute of any such documentary evidence, and built upon mere conjecture; so that while the Aaronic hierarchy, as has been said, was a pyramid resting on its base, the prelatic is a pyramid trembling on its apex. Again, the Aaronic hierarchy was supported by a continuous attestation, by means of a prophetic and miraculous economy, running on abreast of its course, for many centuries; but the prelatic hierarchy, without pretending to the former at all, boasts of the latter only to its shame; its miracles being impudent and impious frauds, as no one who examines them can doubt. Again, the Aaronic hierarchy maintained its integrity and original purity, in doctrine and in polity, amid the defections of princes and of the people for ages; while the other has been found patronizing polytheism, (that is, saint worship,) and idolatry, in their most debasing forms. And, finally, while the Aaronic hierarchy is sustained by innumerable predictions, the prelatic is not only not thus supported, but is, on the contrary, denounced by them, with an irrefragable precision and copiousness of description.

1) Milton's Reason of Ch. Govt. Wks. vol. i. p. 92.

2) See this argument fully and ably presented, by Taylor, in his Ancient Christianity, vol. ii. part viii. pp. 403–422, from which we have derived it.

Fifthly, we remark, that, even were the analogy between these two orders as striking as it is deficient, there would still be wanting any authority for deducing from the one the divine warrant for the other. 'How, then,[1] the ripe age of the gospel should be put to school again, and learn to govern herself from the infancy of the law, the stronger to imitate the weaker, the freeman to follow the captive, the learned to be lessoned by the rude, will be a hard undertaking, to evince from any of those principles, which either art or inspiration hath written.' For such an inference there is wanting any authority in the New Testament, which, in no part of it, makes a comparison; which, if the prelatic theory is true, we cannot imagine would have been overlooked. On the contrary, it teaches us that there is no such analogy whatever: that this whole system of Jewish polity was now to be exchanged for another; and that, consequently, as the apostle Paul argues, 'the priesthood being changed, there is made, of necessity, a change also of the law.' (Heb. 8: 13.) Any parallel, which ingenuity might draw between the Jewish and prelatic order, is still further destroyed, by the establishment of that true priesthood, which was contemplated and prefigured by this Jewish polity. We are taught that the Jewish hierarchy, and their offerings, services, and ceremonial, were all typical of Jesus Christ, in his sacrifice and mediation; and that the high priesthood, in particular, was an eminent type and emblematic representation of Him who is expressly denominated 'the High Priest of our profession.' (Heb. 3: 1.) Christ, in his work, sacrifice, and death, is the 'end of the law for righteousness'—its sum, substance, and complete antitype; the temple representing the universal church, and the high priest the universal head.[2] The term priest is, therefore, never given in the New Testament to the ministers of the gospel. It is carefully withheld from them. Nor can it be given to them without the implication of the most serious and fundamental errors. To prelatists and Romanists, therefore, who would draw an analogy between the Jewish and the christian church, we present the inspired argument of the epistle to the Hebrews. Here the apostle, so far from pointing out any such analogy in the priesthood, the temple, or the continual sacrifice, shows, on the contrary, that there is a striking and designed contrast, and that, while the former are done away, the institutions of Christ alone remain.[3]

1) Milton's Wks. vol. i. p. 90.
2) Ibid, vol. i. p. 102.
3) See Lond. Chr. Obs. Sep. 1812, pp. 552, 558.

It is thus this matter presents itself to the minds of intelligent and converted Jews. Neander every where insists on this view of the christian dispensation and polity.[1] Mr. Herschel also presents the same views, in his very interesting letter to Mr. Sibthorp.[2] He shows how, by education, he was predisposed so these hierarchical views, and that when first impressed on the subject of christianity he was among Roman catholics, and received their instructions.[3] And yet, what is his testimony? 'You state,' says he,[4] 'that the constitution of the ancient Jewish church led you to look for a similar constitution in the church of Christ. Strong as my predilections in favor of that church may naturally be supposed to have been, I was led, by the perusal of the New Testament, to a different conclusion. I find the two dispensations spoken of much more in the way of contrast than of resemblance. When a parallel is drawn between them, it seems invariably to follow this rule; that what the Jewish church was outwardly, the christian church was to be spiritually; those spiritual blessings, that were shadowed forth to the Jews by types and ceremonies, were to be possessed by the christian church, as blessed realities.' 'I should greatly exceed the limits of a letter such as this, if I pursued this subject in the way it might be carried out. Suffice it again to repeat, that the Jewish and christian dispensations are either directly contrasted, or, if compared, it is by showing that the types of the former have some corresponding spiritual reality in the latter. You state very strongly the impression made on your mind, by the correspondence you discovered between the pope and the Jewish high priest.' 'Now I must candidly confess my surprise, to find in an educated man, like you, a confusion of type and antitype, that, in an unlettered man, would have been considered an ignorant blunder. If the pope be the antitype of the Jewish high priest, then you ought to have had bullocks and goats slain at Rome, as the antitypes of the bullocks and goats sacrificed at Jerusalem.' 'A favorite quotation of the upholders of apostolic succession is, the assertion, made through Paul, when speaking of the high priest: 'no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' But where is there any warrant for drawing a parallel between the Jewish priesthood, and the pastors and teachers of the christian church? We

1) See Hist. of the Plant. of the Chr. Ch. passim, and Hist. of the Chr. Rel. and Ch.

2) Reasons why I, a Jew, have become a Catholic and not a Roman Catholic. Lond. 1842.

3) Pp. 7, 12.

4) Pp. 6, 9, 10, 19, 20, 24, 25.

have the authority of the Holy Ghost, for saying, that the high priest was the type of Christ, and the other priests the types of believers. We are 'an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices.' If we insist on finding out an analogy to christian teachers, we may discover some in the Levites, who taught Israel, 'and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about, throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.' But the Levites were not priests; they were not of the family of Aaron: they were only appointed to minister unto the priests, and do the service of the tabernacle. And it would be rather a hazardous step, in the advocates of apostolic succession, to bring forward the Levites as types of their modern priests. 'Thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together; and thou shalt bring the Levites before the Lord; AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SHALL PUT THEIR HANDS UPON THE LEVITES.' What would Rome and Oxford say to this imposition of hands — this mode of ordination?'

Sixthly—But, after all, it may be shown, that our zeal against the admission of this argument, arises from an earnest contention for the truth of God, and not from any fear of its application to the question before us. For, it is most clear, that the only true and proper analogy is found in the order and doctrine of presbyterianism, and not in that of either the Romish or the Anglican prelacy. As we have already seen, Christ Jesus, as the Head over all things to his body, the church, is the true and only antitype of the high priesthood, as being 'the apostle and high priest of our,' that is, the christian, 'profession.' He, and He alone, as the ever-living and ever-present head, governor, and guide of the church, is still, and must ever remain, the only high priest, under the gospel dispensation, and embody in himself all the powers, prerogatives, and functions, of this supreme and highest order in the church of God. His supereminent dignity and divine superintendence we acknowledge; and it is on behalf of this royalty and kingly crown, of our one glorious and only head, our banners have been borne aloft, even when around them there have fallen, in bloody massacre, thousands of their brave defenders. This, then, is our first order, as it was represented and held forth in the high priesthood, and as that priesthood is expressly interpreted in the sacred oracles. To the second class of priests, as the general order or ministry of the sanctuary, our presbyters, who are also the general order or ministry of the New Testament church, will most literally correspond. Thus far all is

plain. Nor are we here deserted. For, as Mr. Jones teaches us,[1] Christ appointed the seventy, because the number seventy agrees to that of the elders who were appointed to assist Moses in his ministry. The same thing is asserted by Saravia.[2] But who were those elders, who were associated with Moses, in the government of the ancient church? They were lay officers, as Saravia admits.[3] They assisted only in government, as representatives of the people, being chosen from each tribe, and not from the priestly succession, and they were entirely distinct from the other orders named, the high priest, the priests, and the Levites. The consequence, therefore, is, that if, as prelatists teach, 'God has so ordained that the christian church, under the gospel, should not depart from the model of the church under the law,' there must be now an order of teaching ministers, correspondent to the ancient priesthood, Jesus Christ himself being the great high priest; an order of spiritual governors as representatives of the people, parallel to the ancient elders; and an order of deacons resembling the ancient Levites; which is the identical arrangement adopted by the presbyterian church and rejected by the prelacy.

But, in both the Romish and English prelacy, Christ is dethroned from his supremacy and headship. He is completely stripped of his high priesthood and royalty, and made to bow the knee in servile homage, in the one case to the pope, the apostle and high priest of the Romish, and in the other case to the king or queen, the apostle and high priest of the English hierarchy. In neither is there any proper or allowable parallel to the high priesthood of old; while in both the order of prelates are left without even the imaginary assistance to be derived from some visionary resemblance to the vanished hierarchy of a system, which has waxed old and been taken away. Their supreme head alone corresponds to the Jewish high priest; their priests to the Jewish priests; and their deacons to the Levites; while the poor outcast and famished order of prelates is banished from the church of God, or made to eke out its beggarly subsistence upon air-built phantoms and unsubstantial dreams.

Seventhly, and finally, we may remark, that this argument has been abandoned by many of the ablest prelatists, both Romish and Anglican. 'The Old Testament,' says Sut-

1) Of Nayland. Wks. vol. iv. p. 356.

2) Saravia on the Priesthood, pp. 59 and 352.

3) 'In the Council of the Priests of the Synagogue, I find, indeed, elders who were not priests.' Ibid, p. 124.

livius,[1] 'had one temple, many sacrifices, orders of priests and Levites, sacred rites, and laws, which things belong not at all to the New Testament.' He is supported by bishop Burnet,[2] Stillingfleet,[3] Whitaker,[4] Bilson,[5] and others.[6] The argument for the prelatical hierarchy, founded upon its analogy to the Jewish, is therefore to be rejected as absurd: as proving too much, and therefore proving nothing: as leading to great and serious evils; as being without any foundation in the facts of the case; as being unsupported by any divine authority; as being suicidal and confirmatory of presbyterianism; and as being, therefore, abandoned by prelatists themselves.

## § 2. *The argument for prelacy, founded upon the heavenly hierarchy, examined and disproved.*

But our prelatic friends, dissatisfied with the antiquity and glory to be derived from the venerable bench of the Jewish priesthood, or even the more primitive prelacy of Adam and his family, (which we have ourselves heard claimed in all sincerity of argument) — have now, it would seem, by the heavenly researches of some Herschel discoverer, found their true original in the orders established among the hierarchies above. It has now been brought to light, by the far-penetrating gaze of a recent ecclesiastical astronomer, that among the bright intelligences, who fill the courts of the church triumphant, a temple not made with hands, there are three orders of archangels, angels, and seraphim; and that, 'when God came to introduce his system of religion and government upon earth, we find his arrangements below analogous to those above.' As thus, as one star differeth from another in glory, so do prelates, priests, and diocesans differ from each other, though all are glorious.[7]

It is certainly not in our power, from an examination of the 'original documents' upon which this new revelation rests, or from an actual survey of the heavenly world, to give to it a positive denial. It labors, however, under the very great presumptive contradiction of scripture, which designates the

1) De Pontif. lib. i. cap. 8; and de Pres. cap. 4, 5, 6, 8, 14.

2) Confer. p. 194.

3) Iren. part ii. ch. iii.

4) De Pontif. Rom. Quest. i. c. 2.

5) Perpetual Govt. of Christ's Church, ch. ii. p. 12. See in Jameson's Sum. pp. 36, 37, and Cyp. Isot. 224, 281.

6) On this whole argument, see as above, and Powell on the Apost. Succ. second ed. pp. 49, 50, 66, 77, 302; Boyse's Anct. Episc. pp. 295, 296; see Elliott on Romanism, vol. i. p. 466.

7) Boyd's Sermons on the Church, p. 38.

angelic hosts by at least eleven or twelve different titles,[1] and which, for aught these gentlemen have told us, may represent as many orders, instead of three. But what is more than this, the scriptures nowhere speak of an order of *archangels* at all, which may, therefore, the more fairly represent the order of prelates, since both are of human origin and device. But, what is more, in the only passages where there is a reference to the order of the heavenly sanctuary, we are actually informed that the order of presbyters occupied the first rank, and stood nearest to the throne of the divine majesty. (See Rev. 4 : 4 ; elder is the same as presbyter. Rev. 5 : 6 ; and 7 : 11 ; and 7 : 13 ; and 14 : 3.) But, still further, and what must be most mortifying to those who tell us, that 'the great characteristic of their branch of the church of Christ is a reverence for antiquity ;'[2] this theory is entirely unsupported by that ultimate standard of all verity, the universal consent of all the fathers. Clemens Alexandrinus, who probably gave the first hint which led the way to the present discovery, was unfortunately, as we shall show, a presbyterian ; and in the very passage in question only makes mention of two orders, saying, that these persons, 'being taken up into the clouds, shall first be made deacons, and then shall be taken into the *presbytery*, according to the *progress of glory*.'[3] When we come to the other fathers, we find no agreement among them, as to the order of the celestial hierarchy. Origen and others were of opinion, that there were many orders of them not mentioned by the apostles. Others reckon up nine orders of angels. The author under the name of Dionysius, the Areopagite, makes three grand or archiepiscopal orders, and three subordinate orders under each. Some of the rabbins again make four orders, and others ten ; while the Jesuit Celert, and many others, have settled an entire ceremonial, and rules for precedence among the angels. But, alas for it ! neither in the Jesuits, the rabbins, the fathers, or the Scriptures, is there any foundation for the angelic descent of this prelatic doctrine of *three* orders of the christian ministry.

### § 3. *The argument for prelacy, founded upon the polity of the Jewish synagogue, examined and disproved.*

But, when driven from the sanctuary, prelatists take refuge in the synagogue. Thus bishop Burnet, in his conferences,

1) See Eph. 1 : 21 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 22 ; Col. 1 : 16 ; 1 Sam. 4 : 4 ; Is. 6 : 2, 6 ; Gen. 12 : 17 ; Job, 1 : 8 ; Rev. 22 : 16 ; Rev. 12 : 7.

2) See Ancient Things of the Catholic Church, p. 7, being Tract No. 153, of the Am. Prot. E. Tract Society.

3) Stromat. lib. vi. p. 667 ; in Corbet on the Church, p. 114.

endeavors, by many satisfactory reasons, to show, that the apostles adopted that form of ecclesiastical polity, which they found existing in the Jewish synagogue, 'those things only excepted, wherein the christian religion required a change to be made:' and then argues, that as this form was prelatical, and included the three orders of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, that, therefore, the original form of the christian church must likewise have been prelatical.[1] Now this argument is, to our minds, perfectly conclusive, either for or against prelacy, accordingly as the facts in the case oppose or support the middle proposition, that is, the assumed prelatical form of the synagogue polity. And as we believe an investigation of this matter will strongly confirm our position, and the conclusions we have drawn from scripture, we shall more fully examine into the facts in the case.

It is the opinion of those most profoundly versed in Hebrew antiquities, that the christian church adopted, with slight modifications, the discipline of the synagogue.[2] That form of government extended, as is believed, back to the time of Moses, and certainly to a very remote antiquity.[3] There is every reason to believe, that the ecclesiastical system of synagogues originated in a divine institution, as it was certainly perpetuated with the divine approbation. Synagogues are called 'God's synagogues,' in Ps. 74: 8. In the synod of Jerusalem, James said, 'Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.' Acts, 15: 21.[4] Moses had required, that the seventh day should be 'the sabbath of rest, and holy convocation.' Lev. 23: 3. 'The reason of erecting synagogues,' says Stillingfleet, 'was grounded on this command.'[5] For as there was only one temple, to which the people were to repair only at the great solemnities, it was impossible that they could obey this positive command without assembling every sabbath in some such form as the synagogue. 'What could they do,' asks Lightfoot, 'without synagogues, but lose the law, sabbath, religion, and the knowledge of God and themselves, and all.'[6] We therefore find the people, at

1) Vind. of the Ch. of Scotl. Conf. 4, pp. 161 – 163.

2) Grot. in Acts, 11: 30. Seld. de Synedr. lib. i. c. 8, p. 121. Seq. Lightf. Hor. Hebr. c. 4, p. 133. Stillingf. Irenic. p. 239. Nolan's Cath. Char. of Chr. p. 169. Paget's Def. of Presb. Ch. Govt. part ii. ch. iii. p. 42 – 61, where he adduces very numerous authorities. Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 139.

3) Seld. ibid, lib. ii. c. 5, § 1, p. 140.

4) See these passages fully vindicated, and their divine origin proved, in Plea for Presbytery. Letter iii. § iii. p. 143, 2d ed. Belfast: 1841.

5) Irenicum, ch. vi.

6) Wks. vol. i. p. 609.

an early period, assembling together on the Sabbath day, to receive instruction from their prophets, (2 Kings, 4: 23,) that is, in synagogues. Our blessed Saviour, also, constantly joined in this form of worship, and gave to it the seal of his divine approbation, by consecrating two of its ordinances as christian sacraments.[1]

We may well, therefore, imagine, that to it the apostles would look, as their model in all their institutions, and in this expectation we are confirmed by a reference to the facts in the case. According to this discipline, there were in our Saviour's time, in all the cities and villages, PRESBYTERIES, consisting of such a number of members as was proportionate to the population.[2] The smallest of these consistories was composed of three presbyters,[3] who possessed the right of admitting others into their order,[4] by the imposition of hands, and who were thus constituted presbyters, and received authority to teach, bind, and absolve.[5] It is believed, that the apostle Paul was in this way ordained a scribe or presbyter, and that this accounts for his entering at once upon the work of preaching, until, as a model for others, he was formally ordained at Antioch.[6] In every synagogue there were a bishop, presbyters, and deacons. The bishop was called by the several names of bishop, pastor, presbyter, and angel of the church. He presided in the assembly, directed the reading of the law, expounded it, offered up prayers, and generally conducted the public worship. The presbyters constituted, together with the bishop, a council or senate, who conducted all the affairs of the synagogue. Their common title was that of presbyter, the others being given according to the duty assigned. The deacons again were appointed for the purpose of ministering to the poor, and serving tables.[7]

Now, while the sacred records inform us of the constant

1) Stillingf. ibid, p. 240. Lightf. ibid, p. 118.

2) Seld de Syn. lib. ii. c. 4, § 2, p. 144. Stillingf. ibid, p. 244.

3) Seld. ibid, § 2, 144, § 3, 148.

4) Seld. ibid, § 4, 182, § 5, 183.

5) Seld. ibid, § 2, 144, § 7, 195.

6) Wilson on the Ch. p. 279, and Lect.

7) I might spread out quotations in proof of these important positions, but it will be sufficient to refer to them, as many of them are given at length by Dr. Miller on the Christian Ministry. Philad. 1840, pp. 83 – 90. We refer, therefore, to Neander's Hist. of the First Plant. of Christ. vol. i. p. 177. Burnet's Obs. on the 1st and 2d Canon. Lond. 1724, pp. 2 and 83. Lightfoot's Wks. vol. i. p. 308; vol. ii. pp. 133, 755. Kuinoel, Com. on Acts, 20: 28. Jenning's Jewish Antiq. vol. ii. pp. 54, 55. Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 63, 78. Eng. ed. Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. p. 239. Pfaff de Obl. Euchar. § 24, p. 256. Saravia on the Priesthood, p. 124. Vitring. de Syn. Vit. lib. ii. c. 11. Reland. Antiq. Ebr. 110. Riddle's Christ. Antiq. p. 160. Bp. White's Lect. on the Catech. Phil. 1813, p. 462.

and solemn sanction given to this polity by our blessed Saviour, — and of the regular attendance upon its worship of the early christian converts — nowhere do they announce any abrogation of the system, or any change in its discipline. On the contrary, as has been seen, the christian churches first formed, are represented as placed under the government of presbyteries,[1] to which our reformers have even applied the term synagogues.[2] The terms presbyter and bishop are, according to the usage of the synagogue, used interchangeably,[3] and in like manner, only two distinct classes of officers are enumerated by the apostles, even when the occasion would have led to the mention of any others that were instituted.[4] These presbyters are also described as 'ordaining presbyters in every church or city,[5] by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.'[6]

Among the Jews, wherever there were an hundred and twenty of them together, they could erect a synagogue: and, in like manner, the number of the first christian church was an hundred and twenty, (Acts, 1: 15.) And thus do we find churches erected in the smallest villages, as at Cenchrea; and in houses, with their bishops or presbyters, and their deacons, even to a late period. There was thus a bishop at Bethany and elsewhere.[7] In short, to use the words of archbishop Whateley, 'all the circumstances which have been noticed as naturally pertaining to every community, are to be found in that religious community in which the disciples had been brought up; the Jewish church, or, as it is called in the Old Testament, the congregation or ecclesia, of which each synagogue was a branch. It had regular officers: the elders or presbyters, *the rulers of synagogues:* ministers or deacons, &c. — it had bye-laws: being not only under Levitical law, but also having authority, within certain limits, of making regulations and enforcing them by penalties, (among others, that which we find alluded to in the New Testament, of excommunicating or casting out of the synagogue,) and it had power to admit proselytes.'[8] 'It appears highly probable,' adds this writer, 'I might say morally certain, that wherever a Jewish synagogue existed, that was brought — the whole or chief part of it — to embrace the gospel, the apostles did not

1) Acts, 21: 18; 11: 30; 14: 23.
2) See Voetius's Politicæ Eccles. tom. iv. p. 164. 'De Synedriis seu consistoribus seu presbyteris.'
3) Acts, 20: 17, 28; Titus, 1: 5, 7.
4) 1 Tim. 3: 2, 8.
5) Acts, 14: 23; Titus, 1: 5.
6) 1 Tim. 4: 14; Acts, 13: 1–3; 2 Tim. 1: 6; 1 Tim. 4: 14.
7) See Bishop Burnet's Obs. on the first Canon, pp. 31, 32.
8) Kingdom of Christ, Essay ii. § 4, p. 63, Eng. ed.

there so much *form* a christian church, as make an existing congregation christian, by introducing the christian sacraments and worship, and establishing whatever regulations were requisite for the newly adopted faith, leaving the machinery of government unchanged; the rulers of synagogues, elders, and other officers, whether spiritual or ecclesiastical, or both, being already provided in the existing institutions. And it is likely, that several of the earliest christian churches did originate in this way.'[1] This will be made still more apparent by attending to the perfect identity in the mode of conducting the public worship of the church, by reading the scriptures, expounding some portion of it, the offering of public prayers, the benediction, and the amen; and the order of worship in the synagogue. In fact, Justin Martyr and Tertullian, in detailing the order of the primitive church, might be supposed to delineate that of a synagogue, only substituting christian for Jewish doctrines and ordinances.[2] The same view is taken by Milman, in his recent history of Christianity,[3] who also adds, that 'episcopal authority never took root in the synagogue;'[4] and by Neander,[5] who shows, that the term synagogue was designedly used by the apostle James, and appropriated by the christian churches formed by Jewish converts.[6]

To this wonderful parallel between scripture facts, and the known order of the synagogue polity, the testimony of the earliest antiquity will be found to agree. As the fragments of some remnant of ancient sculpture are found to fit into one another, so are the Jewish synagogue service, and that of the apostolical fathers, found to be concurrent and harmonious. Of course, we exclude from this comparison the writers of a later age, when changes had been perfected, corruptions matured, and when, for their substantiation, earlier writings had been grossly fabricated, and notoriously falsified, by hierarchical interpolations. And here, let an episcopalian, to whose researches we are indebted, institute the comparison. 'On looking into this comparison,[7] we find Ignatius not only recognises the existence of a presbytery, but under a term analogous to that of the sanhedrim;[8] and represents a congregation wherein such presbyters presided,

1) Ibid, § 9, pp. 78, 79.
2) See this analogy presented by Stillingfleet, Iren. part ii. ch. vi. pp. 262, 263.
3) Vol. ii. p. 65, B. ii. ch. iv.
4) Id. Note.
5) Hist. of the Plant. of Christ. by the Ap. vol. i. ch. ii. pp. 34–47.
6) Ibid, vol. xi. p. 18.
7) Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 173, 175, 178.
8) Ignat. ad Philad. c. 4, 7, 8, ad Smyrna, c. 11.

as properly constituting a church.[1] He represents the body to which that term belonged, and not the bishop independently of them, as ordaining a minister for a particular mission;[2] and directs, in a letter to Polycarp, that a presbytery should be summoned for a similar purpose.[3] He does not, indeed, state the number of persons by whom orders were administered, but, in mentioning the presbyters by name, he merely notices three;[4] to one of whom he gives the title of bishop, or superintendent, conformably to the discipline observed in the synagogue.[5] Whatever defect may be supposed to exist on this point, in his evidence, is supplied by the apostolical canons,[6] the first of which prescribes, that the number of those who ordained to the episcopate should be three, or two at the least.' Again; 'The Jewish church, previously to the apostles, thus agrees in its testimony with that of the christian church, subsequently to their times; their concurring evidence placing beyond all doubt, that the ecclesiastical discipline, in the whole of the time, continued unvaried. In this single consideration, an adequate cause is assigned for the silence of the inspired writers on this subject; which was of too paramount importance to be neglected, were the supposition of those well founded, who maintain, that it was new modelled by the apostles. The casual reference to the subject is precisely that into which they would be naturally led, had it undergone no material alteration. The single fact of its having thus continued unchanged, was all that remained for them to impart, and had they formally avowed it, they would have rather brought discredit than confirmation to their testimony, as undertaking to disclose what was already notorious.'

The parallel between the form and order of the Jewish synagogue and the primitive churches, founded and organized by the apostles, and also the presbyterian churches at this day, is, therefore, complete and undeniable. And hence, we conclude, that this argument, from the Jewish synagogue, not only does not favor prelacy, but absolutely overthrows it and establishes presbytery. This we will make manifest, in conclusion, by presenting an extract from the treatise on the ceremonies and customs of the Jews, drawn from the works of Leo of Modena and Buxtorf,[7] which constitutes the first volume of that celebrated work, 'The Ceremonies and Reli-

1) Id. ad. Tral. c. 3.
2) Ignat. ad Smyrn. c. 11, ad Philad. c. 10.
3) Id. ad Polyc. c. 7.
4) Id. ad Magn. c. 3.
5) Seld. it. lib. xi. c. 5, § 3, p. 148.
6) Can. Apost. § 1.
7) See Pref. p. 1.

gious Customs of the various Nations of the known World,' commonly ascribed to Picart, the engraver of its beautiful designs. The author is a Roman Catholic. And yet, he says,[1] as there was in every synagogue a principal or superintendent appointed to preside over the other elders; so in the christian assemblies there was likewise a superior, whom some of the fathers of the church have likewise nominated the president, though, for the most part, he is distinguished by the title of elder or bishop, in the books of the New Testament. Such as were of the first degree in the synagogues, were commonly called Zekenim, elders, in imitation of the seventy elders, whom Moses had appointed to be the judges of the sanhedrim. Even he who presided over the rest, assumed the name of elder, being only, as it were, their dean or superior. In the first assemblies of the christians, such as were of the first degree assumed, likewise, the name of presbyteri, elders, or priests. The principal or bishop, who was the superior of those elders, took also the title of an elder; and for this reason, the name of bishop is sometimes confounded with the name of priest or elder, in the New Testament. The council of the first christian assemblies was, for no other reason, called *presbyterium*, or a council of elders. The bishops presided in it, as the principal and first elder, sitting in the midst of the others, in the manner before mentioned. The priests or elders, who sat on each hand of him, had each their respective seat as judges, and on that account, are called *assessores episcoporum*, by the fathers of the church. Nothing of any importance was put in execution till it had been first controverted in this assembly, where the bishop made but one body with the other elders or priests; because the authority, which is now called episcopal, was not dependent on the bishop alone, but on all the elders jointly, that were under the bishop; and this practice was observed at Rome, likewise, for several ages.' . . . The name of cathedral church, in all probability, is derived from this ancient manner of sitting, in the primitive churches, or first assemblies of the christians. 'This conformity of discipline, between the church and the synagogue, will be still more conspicuous, if we reflect on the ancient customs of the church. For example, in former times, the bishops only had the care and management of schools; and it is not to be questioned, but that, as the Jewish synagogues were schools, in which the law was expounded, and that there were schools erected near the syna-

1) Fol. 1, pp. 119, 120.

gogues; so the bishop and elders, or priests, in the same manner, had the care and direction of schools amongst christians; there having been schools from the earliest ages of christianity in the city of Alexandria. In most cathedrals, there are still some visible remains of this custom, where there are officers to which the care of schools is annexed.' [1]

1) On this whole subject see Burnet's Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 53, &c. and on the 1st Canon, p. 31. Basnage's Hist of the Jews, B. v. ch. iv. p. 406, &c. Dr. Miller on the Ministry, new ed. p. 76, &c. Vitringa de Syn. Vet. p. 16, Prol. c. 3, pp. 20, 475, 479. Jenning's Jewish Antiq. vol. ii. p. 47, &c. See the subject largely handled by Stillingfleet, in his Irenicum, part ii. ch. iv. Thorndike's Disc. on the Service of God in Religious Assemblies. Confut. of I. S. Princ. of the Cyprianic Age, Edinb. 1706, p. 151. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 324. Paget's Def. of Presb. Ch. Govt. part ii. p. 45–61. Lewis's Origines Heb. of the Heb. Repub. B. iii. c. 21 and 22, vol. i. Relandi Antiq. Sacr. Vet. Hebr. 1717, c. 10.

# CHAPTER XIV.

THE ARGUMENT FOR PRELACY, DERIVED FROM ITS EARLY PREVALENCE AND ALLEGED UNIVERSALITY, EXAMINED AND DISPROVED; AND ITS GRADUAL INTRODUCTION CLEARLY ACCOUNTED FOR.

§ 1. *The argument for prelacy, from its early introduction, examined.*

But how, it is asked, was it possible, or at all credible, that the primitive church should early depart from the practice of the apostles, or that this departure should have become universal? This argument, which is proclaimed by Chillingworth, Leslie, and others, to be an absolute demonstration of prelacy, has, in our estimation, no force at all. To us it appears both possible and credible, that such a departure should have taken place, and that it did actually occur. To such a change there was a strong tendency, from the adaptation of the prelatic system to that pride, and love of power, pomp, and circumstance, which are so congenial to the natural heart of man, and also from its conformity to the existing forms and usages of the prevailing religions of the age. This tendency we find to have been actually manifested, in reference to every doctrine and ordinance of the gospel. Not one of them remained in its original simplicity. Every one of them was subjected to the *improvements!* the *additions!* and the *ornaments!* by which men hoped to give them greater attractiveness and efficiency. The original institutions of baptism and the Lord's supper, were soon concealed under the cumbrous forms and ceremonies with which they were encrusted, while there was a continual effort to meet the prejudices of the pagan multitude, who had been accustomed to gorgeous rites, pompous ceremonies, and the affectation of great and momentous mystery. In illustration of this point, we might easily adduce numerous examples. But it is unnecessary,

as the facts cannot be denied. It is sufficient to remark, that this tendency was developed, even during the lives of the apostles themselves, and in the very first churches they had established. Even then and there was this departure from apostolic truth and order, and the introduction of humanly-devised arrangements, made manifest. 'Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years; I am afraid of you,' says the apostle to the churches of Galatia, (Gal. 4: 10, 11.) To correct such abuses, and the tendency to greater, were all the apostolic epistles immediately written. How severe are the reproofs conveyed to all the Asiatic churches, through the apostle John, in the book of Revelation. Are we not admonished, that even then the mystery of iniquity had begun to work, and that it would continue to increase until the anti-christian system should be perfected?

To our minds, therefore, the only wonder is, that any can, for a moment, seriously question the possibility, or the credibility, of such a change. We should, *a priori*, in entering upon the history of the church, look out for the progressive inroads of such inventions and will-worship of man, and in the gradual consummation of the hierarchical system we find all our anticipations no more than realized.

Nor is it any valid objection to our conclusion, that we cannot point out any specific time when the alleged change took place. No such burden rests upon us. We challenge the apostolicity of the prelatic theory, and have shown that it cannot be built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. It is enough for us to point out, in the prevailing system of after ages, a dissimilarity to this primitive model. We have nothing whatever to do with the time or the manner of the change, or the persons through whose instrumentality such a discordance arose. Here, in the word of God, is confessedly the original charter and constitution of the church, but it contains nothing like the assumed polity of the prelatic hierarchy. The latter is different from the former, and is not, therefore, divine, or apostolical, but human, and that, whether it took its rise in the first, second, third, or any other century. But could such a change, it is asked, in the sentiments and practice of the church, have been silently introduced? To this let us reply, in the very striking illustration given by Mr. Herschel.[1] 'When the conversation has happened to turn

1) Reasons why I, a Jew, have become a Catholic, and not a Roman Catholic, pp. 27, 28. See also the same argument by which we overthrow this objection, urged by bishop Bull against the Romanists, in reference to the use of images. Vind. of the Ch. of Eng. p. 202. See also a similar reply, as to communion in one kind, in Notes of the Ch. Exam. p. 91.

on the mode of baptism, I have often been amused at the decided negative that has been given to the assertion, that immersion is the prescribed form in the church of England. A reference to the prayer-book of course decided the matter. 'And then, naming it after them, (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it,) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily. But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it.' Here is a case in which, in less than two centuries, the exception has become the universal rule. And so natural is it for men to be impressed by what they daily see, rather than by the recollection of what they once knew to be true, that, while every prayer-book in the kingdom contains evidence to the contrary, the popular feeling certainly is, that sprinkling is the mode most approved by the church of England. If this be the case at a time when printed evidence abounds, how easily, in a time when books were scarce, and the power of reading them equally rare, might customs be introduced by the few, that the many might come to believe, even in the next generation, had subsisted from time immemorial.

And what could be more probable than such a change as prelacy, in the simple and apostolic model of the church? With respect to the remark, that men could hardly have been so presumptuous as to alter the doctrine, or polity, of the apostles, we can only say, with Dr. Burton, that it shows a very slight acquaintance with human nature. If we shut our eyes to our own experience, and to history, we might perhaps imagine, that men would not dare to add to, or diminish from, them; but the moment we allow the light of either to be seen, the delusion must as quickly vanish. Had the apostles returned to earth, a very short time after their departure, they would have found such doctrines and practices professed as they could hardly have recognised as their own. Let it only be remembered, that a hierachical system existed in every pagan temple, and that, in many places, as in Rome, the gospel made its way for five and twenty years, with nothing but the zeal of individuals to spread it, and subject to all their fancies.[1] And when to this we add the natural love of power inherent in our nature, and the many circumstances in the condition of the early christians which tended to concentrate power in the hands of their ministers, who were their leaders, and their purse-bearers, nothing could have been more probable than the gradual introduction of prelacy, upon the ruins

1) See Burton's Bampton Lect. pp. 14, 18, 26, 39.

of presbyterial equality. Usurped power, too, swells like the avalanche, until it becomes irresistible, bears down all opposition, and sweeps before it all that resists its progress. The history of those times is also, in great measure, a matter of tradition. Now what an enormous camera obscura is tradition. How mightily do things grow in the human memory, aided by the imagination, and when pride, ambition, and all that lies in the human heart, is there to encourage it. And what could be more easy, and natural, than the gradual transformation of the presidents of the churches, the elder presbyters, or moderators, into the distinct and superior order of prelatic bishops, and to claim for the office a divine institution, since 'it was then usual to repute all immemorial customs to be deduced from an apostolical tradition.'[1]

But we must also bear in mind, that such a change in the character of the church, and of its ministry and order, was foretold by our Lord and his apostles, in the gospels, epistles, and in the book of Revelation.[2] On this argument we have already dwelt, and shall not again enlarge. But we are necessarily led by these predictions, to find in that very obscurity by which the progress of prelacy is characterized, a strong confirmation of the opinion that it constituted, in connection with the other doctrines associated with it, that mysterious *or then concealed* wickedness, which, even in the apostles' days, was already at work, and which the full coming of the man of sin has distinctly revealed. And is not the fact, that such a change, in many things connected with the polity and government of the church, actually took place, acknowledged by all impartial writers? That a gradual corruption of the church was foretold in scripture, and actually brought about, is plainly taught by the very chiefest of its promoters, the lordly and aspiring Cyprian. In his sixty-seventh epistle,[3] he calls upon his brethren not to be moved or disconcerted, by the errors of the times, and the ambition of some prelates. 'These things,' says he, 'it hath been foretold should happen, towards the end of the world; our Lord and his apostles have jointly confirmed it to us, that, as the world wears away, and antichrist approaches, every thing which is good should wear away with the one, and every thing which is evil should advance with the other.' He then takes courage from the fact that there were '*a good proportion of bishops left*,' who had stood by the truth. 'Wherefore,

1) Barrow on the Creed, *init.* Wks. vol. v. pp. 221–223.

2) See this already proved in Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. vii. p. 162, &c., and Concl. pp. 554–556.

3) § 4.

dear brethren,' he adds, 'although some of our colleagues think fit to neglect the discipline of our Lord, . . . yet that ought not to disconcert our faith, seeing the Holy Ghost hath pointed his threats at such.' Indeed, it is the main object of this epistle, to prove that it is a christian duty to throw off all such corruptions, and the bishops who countenance them.[1] Firmilian, of Cæsarea, charges the churches of Rome with many innovations, and tells them that they vainly pretend apostolical authority for them.[2] Nor were these corruptions without the church, but within the bosom of the catholic church itself, as Origen distinctly affirms.[3] Cyprian, in deep humiliation, laments that the great and general declension of his church had fully required the sharp corrections sent upon it. He shows that a spirit of intrigue and faction infected many of the clergy themselves, and that the most serious attacks had been made upon the order and discipline of the church. And in what strong terms do many others of the fathers describe the general corruption of the church.[4] 'It is true,' says Mr. Waddington, 'that the first operations of corruptions are slow, and generally imperceptible, so that it is not easy to ascertain the precise moment of their commencement. But a candid inquirer cannot avoid perceiving, that about the end of the second, and the beginning of the third century, some changes had taken place in the ecclesiastical system, which indicated a departure from its primitive purity.'[5] This testimony of an episcopal historian might be substantiated by any number of writers, were it at all necessary. The certainty of such a change is unquestionable. Neither can it be denied, that it affected the very subject matter of our discussion, or that the undue exaltation of the ministry was one of the earliest errors.[6] Did not great changes take place in the third century, in reference to the whole office, style, and bearing of the bishops? This change is apparent in the contradictory spirit of Cyprian; for while, as Schlegel says, 'no man can speak in higher terms of the power of the bishops, than the arrogant Cyprian;' 'yet, when urged by necessity, he could give up his pretensions, and submit every thing to the judgment and authority of the church,' and be most 'condescending towards presbyters, deacons, and the com-

1) See also the whole of Cyprian's 63rd and 74th epistles.
2) Ep. ad Cyp. inter Cyp. Ep. 75.
3) In Math. Comm. Series, § 33, 35, pp. 852–854.
4) See Corrybeare's Bampton Lect. pp. 402, 462.
5) Hist. of the Ch. pp. 49, 50.
6) See Dr. Hawkins's Bampton Lect. p. 255.

mon people.[1] Do we not, in this century, read of a whole host of ministerial orders, sub-deacons, acolythi, readers, exorcists, &c., who constituted an essential part of the prelatic hierarchy then fast attaining to maturity? But whence came these orders and officers of the church, with numerous other customs, then firmly rooted in the church? Who can tell their generation? Who can trace them to their source, or dare to say that they constituted a part of the apostolic platform? And if these could be all imposed upon the church, and become interwoven with her divine contexture, who will affirm that the order of the prelacy itself might not, in like manner, be gradually introduced? Certain it is, that Jerome was of our opinion. 'These things I have written,' says that father, 'to show that, among the ancients, presbyters and bishops were the same. But, *by little and little*, that all the seeds of dissension might be plucked up, the whole care was devolved on one. As, therefore, the presbyters know that, *by the custom* of the church, they are subject to him who is their president, so let bishops know that they are above presbyters more by the custom of the church, than by the true dispensation of Christ.'[2] No one can contrast the church in the third century, and the church in the first and second, and say they are not different; or the writings of the one and the other, and not admit that a change had come over the face and order of the church. Clemens Romanus speaks only of bishops and deacons. Polycarp knows only presbyters and deacons. Epiphanius tells us, that at first there were only bishops and deacons. Hilary assures us the elder presbyter was made president, without any new ordination. Such, also, was the custom at Alexandria. According to the reading of the Medicean Codex, Ignatius informs us, that the order of episcopacy was 'a new order.' Medina, in the Council of Trent, declared that, not only Jerome, but also

1) See Mosheim and Milner cent. iii. Punchard's Hist. of Congreg. pp. 42, 43. That prelates were the growth of time and custom, appears further from the fact stated by Tertullian, Lib. de Præscript. Adv. Hær. c. 20. Ac pro inde ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt; that at first the faith was planted in cities. 'And common sense and the least knowledge of times will serve to show, that from thence it was propagated through the countries that lay to (or near) those cities WHICH, THEREFORE, IN TIME, BECAME AND WERE CALLED the territories, parishes, or dioceses of such or such churches.' Thorndike on the Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 16. Such is the argument of an advocate of the hierarchy, and it is a demonstration that no such character as a modern prelate, to whose very existence a diocese is essential, could possibly exist until, in the process of time, such dioceses had been gradually formed.

2) Comment. in Titus.

Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Primasius, and Sedulius, all concurred with Aerius in rejecting prelacy, from any claim to divine right.[1] That a change had gradually been introduced by the custom of the church, is, therefore, demonstrable. 'It is, however, amusing,' says Dr. Nolan, himself an eminent episcopalian,[2] 'to behold with what management an abstract question on the divine right of episcopacy is settled by such reasoners, while the matter of fact investigation, as to the growth of episcopal usurpation, is sedulously kept out of sight. But it is infinitely more amusing to behold with what skill and good fortune, in laboring to illustrate the one point, they succeed in establishing the other. It is impossible, in fact, to rise from a review of the authorities which they accumulate with much dulness and diligence, without obtaining a distinct view of the progress of that spiritual tyranny, which, in the progress of time, was obtained over the clergy and laity. From scripture to the genuine Ignatius; from the genuine Ignatius to Cyprian; from Cyprian to the spurious Ignatius, the climax rises as the tradition advances. The stream, as it proceeds, acquires depth and breadth, while it continues sluggish and muddy. The person who is so blinded by interest or prejudice, as to contend, that its tenor remains unchanged; that the episcopate, in every age, did not advance in authority and ambition; must be prepared boldly to maintain, that the difference between the primitive ministry and the present hierarchy is so slight as not to be discerned. His efforts, in the episcopal cause, must be employed to no purpose, and not a step will be gained, in repelling the present charge, until he has proved, not merely that the three orders of bishop, priest, and deacon, but of archbishop, archpresbyter, and archdeacon, of dean, cathedral, and rural, are of apostolical institution.'

This objection is, therefore, invalid, since it is opposed to the facts of the case. It is also absurd, since it would sanction as divine and apostolical, all errors and customs, the introduction of which we cannot clearly trace. The seeds of such errors may have been planted long before the pestiferous weeds appeared, or attained maturity, — but are these not, therefore, weeds? This argument is nothing more nor less than a popish sophism, invented to cover up the enormities of that corrupt system. How many doctrines are justly pronounced heretical, and how many customs justly deemed

1) See these authorities all quoted in Burnet's Obs. on the 1st Canon.

2) Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 233 235.

unscriptural — as, for instance, exorcism and chrism — of which we cannot trace the first authors, on their gradual progress towards a full establishment.[1] But are these, therefore, to be forced upon us as scriptural and necessary? And because we cannot gratify the *curiosity* of some men, by pointing out what *they* will admit to be the gradual progress of prelacy, are we, therefore, to believe this to be the system of the Bible? No, the principle is popish, and leads to the wholesale adoption of all traditions, around whose origin there may be gathered the mists of darkness and obscurity. This is precisely the argument by which Dr. Wiseman defends the Romish church against the charge of heresy, or apostacy;[2] and it is to be put to silence just by the use of the very weapons employed so vigorously against this Romish Goliah, by that champion of protestantism, Mr. Faber, we mean good common sense. On this principle we could easily demonstrate that in the rainbow there is no such color as orange, since there is no given place at which it may, with clearness and certainty, be said that this color begins, and the others cease to exist. On this principle Nero never was a cruel and wicked despot, because there was a time when, as is reported of him, he exhibited great domestic piety, and an aversion to all harshness and severity, and there was no intervening period when it could be said he then ceased to be virtuous and became determinately wicked. On this principle it may be declared, that the victim of consumption is not mortally diseased, because there can be no period fixed upon, when he *at once* assumed the form of such serious and destructive disease. But, as in each of these cases, the conclusions are manifest, and, therefore, the argument which would disprove them unsound, just so is it in the case before us. The question with us, evidently is — not when, and how, the alleged change took place, but whether the change *has* taken place at all; that is, whether the polity alleged by prelatists to be apostolical, and given by Christ, is, really and truly, that which we find laid down in the word of God. We affirm that it is not, and we call upon those who declare that it is, to demonstrate their assertion from the written record, and to reconcile it with its evident teaching. But, as to the introduction of this system, we believe it to have been gradual, and by slow and imperceptible steps, so as, at no particular time, to cause immediate alarm, and arouse to

1) See Jameson's Fundamentals of the Heir. p. 217, and Chamier's Panstratia, tom. iv. lib. v. c. 16, who gives a whole list of such points. See also Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 340, &c.

2) Lect. on the Doct. vol. i. pp. 314–316.

open and violent resistance. But that this progress was observed, and that alarm was actually taken, and protestations entered against it, we know. And if the fact of such alarm, 'as early as the beginning of the fifth century,' to the progress of the Romish apostacy, is deemed by Mr. Faber, *sufficient*, then assuredly the testimonies of Jerome, and of Aerius, of Primasius, Sedulius, and others, are more than enough to authenticate the fact of this prelatical usurpation.

We would further remark, that, even could prelacy be traced up to the apostolic age of the church, it would not therefore be, *necessarily*, an apostolic institution. Even then, we are taught, the mystery of iniquity was at work. There were many antichrists even in the apostles' times. False teachers, lying prophets, men who said they were apostles, and were not, errors in doctrine, in government, and in practice, then abounded. 'For many deceivers,' says the apostle, 'are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.' 2 John, 5: 7. 'For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.' Tit. 1: 10, 11. There were 'false apostles,' (2 Cor. 11: 13,) 'false brethren,' (Gal. 2: 4,) those who, to gain their ends, would even forge letters, in the name of the apostles, (2 Thess. 2: 2,) 'false prophets who should bring in damnable heresies, . . . and many shall follow their pernicious ways.' (2 Pet. 2: 1, 2.)[1] So extensive were these errors, that bishop Shuttleworth enumerates ninety heresies as having prevailed from the first to the third century.[2] Against these heresies the apostles strove, and wrote, and preached, and forewarned the present and coming ages of the church. The age of heresy began with the age of christianity, and will close only with its close. The first age was as defectible and fallible as any other, and gave birth to as many monstrous perversions of divine things. The various existing sects and denominations, says Mr. Holden, have their counterpart in former ages, . . . and the principles may there be discerned, which at length attained their full growth and maturity.'[3] Papias, Appollinarius, Victorinus, Tertullian, Irenæus, Lactantius, and others, defended the heresy of the personal reign of Christ on earth. Irenæus held that man at the beginning,

1) See many similar passages quoted in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. pp. 427, 428.

2) On Tradition, p. 44, 47, 64.

3) Ibid, p. 130.

when created, was imperfect. Clemens Alexandrinus, and Justin, held that the angels fell in consequence of their carnal lusts for women. Many of the fathers also believed in the propriety of giving the Lord's supper to infants.[1] What controversies were waged, in the earliest times, about the obligation of Jewish ceremonies, the sacramental cup, and whether the wine should be used simply, or with water, on the time and observance of Easter, on heretical baptism, and other matters.[2] The apostle warns the Ephesians that grievous wolves would shortly enter among them. He implies the existence, among churchmen, of covetousness, and ambition of power, of which he gives an illustration in Diotrephes.[3] Cerinthus and Basilides, the founders of heresy and schism, were actuated by the ambition to be reckoned great apostles, and these lived in the first century. Montanus, in the second century, was actuated by a similar motive, as well as Samosatenus, in the third, and Demetrius, of Alexandria, and all the other fomenters of heresy and strife.[4] In short, if we consider the immoral and irreligious state of the world at that time: that the first christians were mostly from the lower orders; the reproofs and remonstrances of the inspired apostles; the fact that the writings of Clement, Ignatius, Barnabas, and Hermas, were at first read in the churches, as if inspired, while full of fabulous analogies: the fact, also, that all the writings of the sacred penmen were not then collected together, and were not universally known and read: we must conclude, that, even in the earliest age, the probability of corruption, both in doctrine and order, was irresistibly strong.[5] 'While,' saith Jerome, 'the blood of Christ was yet but recently shed in Judea, it was maintained that the Lord's body was but an appearance; the Galatians, drawn away to the observance of the law, were again begotten to spiritual life by the apostle; the Corinthians, disbelieving the resurrection of Christ, were urged, by many arguments, to return to the true path. Then Simon Magus, and Menander his disciple, asserted themselves to be powers of God. Then Basilides feigned his great god, Abiaxes, with his three hundred and sixty-five forms! Then Nicholas, *who was one of the seven deacons*, promulged his impurities. I say nothing of the heretics of Judaism, . . . I come to those heretics who mangled the gospels; a certain Saturninus, and the

1) See Jewell's Def. of Apol. part iii. ch. iii. § 1. Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 340.

2) Jameson, ibid, p. 307.

3) Ep. to Titus.

4) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 28, and lib. iv. c. 7, and lib. v. c. 16, and lib. vi. c. 8.

5) See Letters on the Fathers. Letter iv. p. 48, &c.

Ophites, and Cainites, and Sethoites, and Carpocrates, and Cerinthus, and his successor, Ebion, and other pests, *most of whom broke out during the life of the apostle Paul.*' He then goes on to illustrate his position in the case of the seven churches of Asia.[1] To the same effect speak Origen, Dionysius, and others.[2] And hence, it is by the principles of the apostolic law, and not merely by the facts or customs of the apostolic age, that the character and claims of any doctrine, custom, or order, must be ultimately judged. There is no consistent medium between claiming infallibility for the church in *every* age, and inspiration for *all* her teaching and her acts, and attributing it *exclusively* to Christ and to his sacred written word.

The silence of the fathers is objected to us. But besides what has been said on that point, we would further remark, that, on our view of the subject, a comparative silence of the earliest fathers was to have been anticipated. Presbytery being true, and being the established order in the churches, no more than *incidental* allusions could have been looked for. Until the aggressions of the prelatic temper had become visibly apparent, they could not be condemned; and if, when thus visible, their reception had been previously made sure, by imperceptible advances, we might be prepared to find them silently received, and then approved. Thus did the errors of popery steal forth, like the leaves of spring, by a sure but invisible progress. But we may retort still more pointedly upon our opponents. We are certainly placed by them in a most paradoxical predicament, since they tell us that, although it is unquestionably true that the name bishop is, throughout the scriptures, formally given as one of the designations of presbyters; that yet afterwards it was transferred to the order now exclusively known by that title. But when we demand evidence of this change — a very important one, as we regard it — by whom introduced; by what divine authority sanctioned, we receive no other answer than the report given by Theodoret, in the fifth century!! That the change has been made, is certain; but when, and by whom, who can assuredly tell? And yet, in prelatic argument, this report of the fifth century is an all-satisfying demonstration. But, when *we* exhibit the platform of christianity, as drawn up in the word of God, and show that no such thing as prelacy is to be found therein, we are immediately gagged with the allegation that, for many subsequent centuries,

1) Dial. Adv. Lucifer, § 23, 24, tom. ii. col. 196 - 198.

2) See given in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. pp. 432 - 438.

prelacy, as a system, did exist, and that until we can make it demonstrably evident when, where, and by whom it was actually introduced, it must be concluded to have existed always and everywhere. But this argument surely is as good in the one case as in the other, and will just as forcibly substantiate presbytery as prelacy. For, as it never can be made certain when, where, and by whom, the term bishop was transferred to the present order of prelates, and ceased to designate the order of presbyters: of course it must be concluded that no such change was ever authoritatively or properly made; that the term, therefore, as used by the primitive fathers, means what it does *confessedly* mean in the word of God; and that it was only after the presidents among these coequal officers had succeeded in concentrating power in their own hands, that the exclusive appropriation of the name bishop to themselves was formally established. This we believe to be the truth in the case, and the argument must be peculiarly grateful to every prelatic understanding. And, if the testimony of Theodoret is insisted upon, as proof sufficient for the authorized transference of the title, although only *a report of a report;* most assuredly the testimony of Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, to the fact, which he substantiates from holy writ, that 'in the beginning the churches were governed by a common council of presbyters, a presbyter being the same as a bishop, but that afterwards, *by little and little*, the whole care was devolved upon one:' this testimony will, we say, most unquestionably, suffice to establish the claims of presbytery to be the true, primitive, and apostolic order. And let prelatists take hold of whichever horn of this dilemma they may, presbytery must be the gainer, and in neither case a loser.

We have seen how, in the beginning, every church had its presbytery, varying according to its extent, over which one of the presbyters was chosen, to act as president or moderator. This moderator became permanent and fixed, and was chosen at first from regard to age, but afterwards to qualifications. This was the apostolical, primitive, and presbyterian episcopacy. This president being then treasurer, and leader of the society, and the first object of attack and persecution, soon monopolized great power and authority, which were willingly allowed to one at every moment liable to death. He was thus led to receive, par eminence, the name and title of bishop, and to assume, as his right, the exclusive privileges assigned to the office. Thus did the presbyterial or republican episcopacy pass into the parochial

episcopacy. This parochial episcopacy, except in cities, continued until the council of Nice. The assumption of parochial authority by despotic councils, the claim of prelates to the sole power of ordination, and the exclusion of presbyters from councils, paved the way for the establishment of diocesan episcopacy. 'When the first vigor and fervor of church discipline slackened, avarice and ambition creeping in apace into the hearts of churchmen, these, not contented with their allowances out of the churches of the city, which were too small for their growing desires, got churches in the country annexed to them, and for most part served them by substitutes, except at the return of some solemn festivities; and by this means it was that church discipline fell totally into the bishops' hands, and the ancient model being laid aside, new courts, which were unknown to antiquity, were set up, &c.[1] The humble diocesan episcopacy which had arisen in cities, from adherence to the rule that there should only be one community, however many churches, in one place, was adopted by Constantine, as an engine of power, and made the basis of that ecclesiastical hierarchy which has since ruled, oppressed, corrupted, and destroyed the church, and overwhelmed both her purity and her liberty in one common ruin.[2] There is, therefore, an apostolical, a parochial, and a diocesan episcopacy; or, as it may be called, a scriptural, primitive, and patristical or ecclesiastical episcopacy; or, to use the terminology of Beza, a divine, a human, and a satanic episcopacy. We claim the first, and are thus *two* degrees nearer to antiquity and apostolicity, than are prelatists.

### § 2. *The argument for prelacy derived from its universal prevalence.*

The generality of people like to be in a crowd. Multitudes cannot err. The majority must be right. And might makes right. Prelatists, therefore, by dint of loud asseveration, bold assertion, and the reiterated declaration of oft-refuted misstatements, endeavor to make all, who take opinions upon authority, believe that prelacy, that is, as they wish people to conclude, *the present form of prelacy*, has universally existed from the apostles' days until the reformation. Presbytery, it is said, was *then* invented by Calvin, Knox, and others, and foisted into the church. Such statements are common to the

1) Burnet's Obs. on the 2d Canon, p. 59.

2) See Dr. Wilson's Govt. of the Ch. pp. 108, 134, 285, and Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 251; see also Riddle's Christ, Antiq. 193, 194, 170, and Stillingfleet. Iren. part ii. ch. 6. § 13.

most reputable prelatical writers, of all ages and countries. But the whole argument is a mere assumption. It has no more foundation than the late report of the discoveries of Herschel in the moon, and ought, like them, to be universally exploded. Of its utter UNTRUTH, (we can say no less,) we have already had some illustration. Its more full exposure we reserve for our chapter on the antiquity of presbytery. Meantime, we challenge the whole hierarchy to produce *one diocesan bishop, or diocesan church, in the first two centuries;* or to *prove* the existence of any other than *a parochial episcopacy.* It cannot be done, and, therefore, this whole outcry is an imposition upon the credulity of those who will not, or cannot, examine for themselves. And thus have we established, from scripture, the claims of presbyters to the *true* apostolical or ministerial succession, and shown the utter insufficiency of all the objections offered by prelatists, to this scriptural and primitive polity.

# BOOK II.

## THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE TRUE APOSTOLICAL OR MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION, SUSTAINED BY AN APPEAL TO THE FATHERS, THE SCHOOLMEN, THE REFORMERS, AND TO THE ROMISH, ANGLICAN, AND OTHER CHURCHES.

'It were as wise to employ our waking hours in recovering the dreams of night, in order thereby to ascertain the truth of any point, as to settle any doctrinal point by the fruitless toil of explaining the day-dreams of the fathers.'

'Whatsoever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, hath drawn down from of old to this present, in her huge drag-net, whether fish or sea-weed, shells, or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, those are the fathers.' MILTON.

'Who are the fathers? They are merely ancient writers, who lived in the earlier ages of the church.' DR. HOOK'S NOVELTIES OF ROM. p. 5.

# CHAPTER I.

## PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE NATURE, DESIGN, AND VALUE OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS.

### § 1. *Scripture, and not the fathers, the only authoritative standard of faith or practice.*

With scripture the question of church polity must finally rest. The question — and the only question — is, is it a matter of fact, as prelatists teach, that the prelatic system was ordained, by our Lord and his apostles, as the only and permanent order of the church, and was it, as such, universally instituted in all the churches established by them? What then is it to us, to tell us that this system was received and acted upon by the churches of the third and following centuries, or even of the second century. Suppose it was, this would only prove that, *at that period*, this system was received, as having been the one established by the apostles. We are still, therefore, to be assured that such was the fact, and this we can ascertain only from those inspired records which Christ and his apostles have given for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the world have come. Our duty plainly is, not to stop short at any age before that of the apostles; or at any writings but those which were given by inspiration of God. The question, therefore, returns — do these writings propound this prelatic system? For, to admit it, as of divine origination and authority, merely because the uninspired writers of a subsequent age have said so, 'would be nothing more respectable than a gross act of blind credulity.'[1] It would be the admission of a doctrine as divine without proof, and upon merely human and fallible authority.[2] And since, both nega-

1) Faber on Romanism, B. ii. ch. vii. p. 505.

2) 'We are a living church only as we hold the foundation.' Hampden on Tradition, p. 83.

tively and positively, the scriptures disown the system and afford it no substantiation, it follows, as a necessary conclusion, that it never can be established by any possible amount of subsequent testimony, and that the prelatist believes in his system, as having been established by Christ and his apostles, not only without, but even against evidence.

But, it is said, we must have recourse to the fathers, for since the meaning of scripture is ambiguous and disputed, we must seek their interpretation from succeeding writers. But are not these fathers themselves ambiguous, and on these very points? Are they not equally and confidently claimed by the opposite parties in this debate? And who then is to be *their* interpreters, and who the interpreters of *their* interpretation, and so on, ad infinitum? Or can we for a moment imagine that inspired men are to be put to school to uninspired writers, and the records which the Holy Ghost indited, submitted to the correction of weak, fallible, and, in many cases, most ignorant and mistaken persons? Or are we to adopt it as a canon of interpretation, that whenever a question is raised as to the opinions of any author or writings, and especially if, claiming to be inspired, such authors and their writings are to be carefully excluded from examination, and the opinions of others in succeeding ages to be sought as the infallible criterion? Such positions are evidently and grossly absurd, and yet are they implied in this prelatical demand. The only end and design of the whole scheme, is, to get away from scripture, and from the sure judgment against prelacy which scripture contains. And thus, when these men would fasten tradition upon the church of England, as the teacher of faith, they exclude the reformers,—the only competent witnesses,—from bearing testimony in the case, because, forsooth, 'their opinion is the very subject keenly debated, and claimed by opposite schools of the present day.'[1] Surely such men make void the word of God and common sense, by their vain and foolish traditions.

Our inquiry is after a divine institution, and the divine right of prelacy or presbytery, as the original form of church government. And 'all the difficulty is, how a *jus divinum* can be proved when men leave the scriptures, which *they* do in effect when they call in the help of succeeding ages to make the scriptures speak plain for them.'[2] And if the scripture, being once ascertained, became, in its turn, a test for every thing claiming to be apostolical tradition,'[3] then how can

1) See Oxf. Tr. No. 78, Preface, and Jordan's Rea. of Tradition, pp. 10, 11

2) Stillingfleet, Irenec.

3) Keble on Tradition, p. 28.

any patristical traditions, as to the point before us, avail prelatists when contrary to that scripture by which they are to be tried? All the fathers put together, could not surely weigh against direct and positive evidence from the word of God,[1] since it must be conceded, by all who admit the authority of scripture, that from the decision of the word of God there can be no appeal.[2] Besides, an appeal in this case from the scriptures to the fathers has only widened our differences, and made our perplexities more inextricably great. The works on the controversies, originated by this subject, and the interminable question about fathers, would constitute a voluminous library.[3] All parties claim the sanction of antiquity. The Independent, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Prelatist, the Romanist, the Greek, and all the other varieties of christian denominations, are alike confident in appealing to the authority of the early church. The fathers, therefore, may be just as much abused as scripture, and give forth just as uncertain and discordant sounds.[4]

Amid this conflict of opinion and diversity of judgment, there is but one guide and directory, to the inquirer who seeks the true church, where Christ our Lord, as the way, the truth, and the life, may be savingly discovered. The word of God, made plain to the mind by the Spirit of God, implored and obtained from on high — this alone can speak with authority from heaven, and not as the scribes. This is the star in the east, which leads to that temple where Christ is to be found, and where he may be truly worshipped by the poor in spirit. And, as the wise men, after they had been long guided on their way most prosperously, by this heavenly light, turned aside to receive more certifying direction from the rabbis in Jerusalem, and were thereby only darkened, and perplexed, until they again sought light from above; so shall it be with all who turn away from the sure word of scripture, to the deliverances of fathers, and the decrees of councils.

Even when any usage or custom has been traced back fourteen or fifteen hundred years, it is forgotten that there are still four centuries behind; that these also abounded with serious errors; and that, therefore, even here, we may be led astray by false and deluding lights.[5] It is confessedly the lot of all institutions, administered by human agency, to de-

1) Holden on Tradition, p. 129.

2) Wilberforce's Pract. View. Introd. p. 4, 17th Eng. ed. Lond. 1829. See also Milton's Prelat. Episcop. Wks. vol. i. p. 61.

3) See Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 276, 392, 393, 395.

4) See Tracts of the Anglican Fathers, vol. i. p. iv.

5) See Hawkins's Bampton Lect. p. 248.

teriorate, by departing from their original principles. This is peculiarly the case with those institutions which are of divine appointment; for this reason, that, in consequence of their simplicity and spirituality, they are foreign to the natural conceptions of mankind.[1] As the very essence of tradition and human custom, therefore, is change, we are assuredly more certain to find the truth in purity at the fountain, than when the stream has pursued a troubled course, through muddy and polluted channels, and has been commingled with various waters. Hence it becomes necessary, from time to time, to return to original principles and design; to compare existing institutions with what they profess to be, and with their first charter and practice; that we may thus ascertain whether, and how far, they have departed from their original constitution. All subsequent forms and practices in the church must thus be brought to the standard of scripture, and be pronounced right or wrong as they are, or are not, conformable to it. Our final inquiry, in ascertaining what are, or are not, the divinely instituted offices in the church, must, therefore, be, what is the scriptural meaning of the terms employed to designate such offices; and the scriptural description of the offices themselves.

But, it is said, the first fathers, being the immediate successors of the apostles, have preserved to us those views of the apostles, which they orally received, and those institutions they found established by apostolic authority. In reply, we say, that our inquiry simply is as to the asserted fact, that such doctrines and practices have been conveyed to us from the apostles. It is on this point we are at issue with prelatists. We reject nothing claiming to be apostolic or divine, merely because it is unwritten, but because it has not been proved to have been revealed; and because, as we believe, no single article, not capable of proof from scripture, has ever yet been traced to this supreme authority.[2] The points at issue, in the present controversy, relate to the three orders of the ministry. And what is affirmed is, that there exists sufficient evidence to prove that prelacy was adopted by the fathers, as an institution established by the apostles themselves. But for this assertion what is the proof offered? It is nothing more than the *report* of certain men, that such and such things were *orally* delivered, and personally authorized by the apostles; that is

1) See this fully admitted, in Woodgate's Bampton Lect. pp. 1, 2, 10, though they are designed to uphold the opposite views.

2) Hawkins's Bampton Lect. p. 208.

to say, a *report*, delivered by men uninspired, fallible, and liable to error and mistake, that they heard from others, that they heard from certain others, and so on, that such and such things were spoken, and were established by the apostles. The question then is, can any amount of *such* testimony be considered as an *authoritative* record of what was thus orally delivered? Even were we assured that such views and institutions prevailed, say in the second century, could this prove that the report, founded upon other reports, that they were originally communicated by the apostles, in their *oral* teaching, was an accurate and faithful deliverance of what was thus actually conveyed? We do not say that such a concurrent testimony, as to any fact cognizable by the senses, would be insufficient to establish its truth. Far from it. But would such agreement, as to any *report* of what had been *orally* communicated by the apostles, be adequate to authenticate *it* as their general views? Now we must believe that it would not; otherwise all distinction between inspiration and mere human report, is, at once, destroyed, and our faith made to rest not upon the word of God, but upon the mere words of man. And *they*, surely, are entitled to be called apostolical, who build their faith on what are acknowledged to be the genuine remains of the apostles, rather than they who form and fashion their opinions upon the reports of subsequent men, that such and such views were delivered orally by those apostles. Presbyterians, in short, are the true apostolicals, while prelatists are the patristicals. We build on the divine word of God, given by inspired and infallible men; they on the *report* of men, who were neither inspired nor infallible, that certain views were delivered in the very form and manner declared, by these apostles. We do not reject such views because these fathers were not honest and good men, but because the most honest and upright men are exceedingly liable to err in their representation of the opinions and the teaching of others; because, also, the remains of these witnesses, containing these rumors of reports, are few and insufficient; and because, even in those few remains, these prelatical rumors are far from being sustained.[1]

These fathers may not have rightly received such customs and doctrines as given by the apostles, and may have erred also in interpreting the scriptures so as to favor such opinions. We are not, therefore, under any obligation

1) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. Introd. pp. 14–16, Eng. ed., and pp. 499, 527.

to believe any such doctrines to be true, merely because they were anciently received as such.[1] Surely the authority of fathers and councils cannot be foisted upon us, until it is first proved that such authority was delegated to them infallibly, to deliver to us the oral teaching of the apostles, even as the apostles were commissioned to communicate the teaching of God. 'Herein,' says bishop Sherlock, 'we do not consider them as a church, but as credible witnesses.' 'For how can the authority of a company of men who call themselves the church, before I know whether there be any church, move me to believe any thing which was done sixteen hundred years ago.[2] 'For certainly the church has no charter but what is in the scripture.'[3] For, 'should synods, and convocations, and œcumenical councils determine that for an article of faith, which is not plain and intelligible in scripture, *they were ridiculous, indeed, and there were an end of their authority.*'[4]

The very question being, whether the authority of these fathers is what is claimed for them, their own testimony cannot be taken as sufficient proof.[5] The validity of all such proof, drawn from the ancient councils and writings of the fathers, we reject, for sufficient reasons. As to councils, 'for the first three hundred years there was,' as Bellarmine allows, 'no general assembly; afterwards, scarce one in an hundred years.'[6] And when they did take place, their canons were '*episcoporum decreta*,' that is, the decrees of bishops, as Cyprian testifies,[7] 'enacted by the sole authority of bishops,'[8] the presbyters and laity being gradually allowed no other privilege than that of consenting to them when made. Such testimony, therefore, the court of reason and impartial honesty rules to be improper, partial, and wholly inadmissible, seeing that claimants charged with the dishonest usurpation of an authority never delegated to them, as are these prelates, never can be permitted to give testimony in favor of themselves.

### § 2. *On the delusive value attached to the fathers, based on the ambiguity of the term* OLD.

As it regards the alleged testimony of the fathers, we must remember, that there is a great delusion in the value attached

1) See Dr. Ibbot's Disc. on the Authority of the Ancients, in the Boyle Lectures, vol. ii. fol. p. 832, &c. Serm. xii.

2) Notes of the Church, Ex. and Refuted, pp. 6, 45.

3) Ibid, p. 7.

4) Ibid, p. 47.

5) See Jordan's Rev. of Tradition, pp. 51, 79, 85, 90, and Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 61, 64.

6) De Rom. pp. 1 8, in Barrow's Wks. Fol. vol. i. 780.

7) Ep. 1, 48 and 55.

8) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 294, &c.

to their testimony, and, secondly, a great mistake as to its character and amount. This value is made to rest on its great antiquity. Now there is a great fallacy as to the term *old*. In its strict and proper sense, this word means the length of time any thing has existed, and in this sense it is at once apparent, that the age of the earliest fathers was the infancy and childhood of christianity, and that, whatever wisdom is to be attached to age, or to be derived from experience, must be looked for, not in the earliest but in the present age.[1] We are the fathers, they were the children. Ours is the ancient, theirs was the new-formed church. Ours are all the lights of experience, with all the records of inspiration, and all the investigations and experiments of the wise and the pious. The early age, as we have seen, like that of childhood, was most open to delusion, and least able to resist or to detect encroaching abuses. The same multiplied errors in doctrine and practice, which existed in the apostolic age, continued, when there were no longer any inspired and infallible guides, to tell what error was. Neither were the churches then generally possessed of the scriptures, nor of all the Bible, so as in all cases, at once, to try the new-broached sentiments, whether they were of God. It was a long time before the whole canon of scripture was agreed upon by universal testimony. Some churches had one part, some another; Rome herself had not all. We, however, do possess the written word, in all its fulness, and are thus as near the fountain-head as the first christians; possess, substantially, all that the apostles preached; and have far greater facilities for drawing from the fountain the clear and unadulterated water of eternal truth. The earliest was in truth the most ignorant and the weakest age of the church. The state of the world, generally, was then immoral and irreligious. The great body of the first christians were of the lowest orders. The first churches, as is evident from the reproofs of the inspired epistles, were exposed to the greatest disorders, the wildest schemes, the most fatal and licentious tendencies, and the most artful and hardened deceivers. From the death of the apostles until the time of Justin Martyr, that is, for *eighty* years after the death of Peter and Paul, and about fifty years after the death of John, there was no writer of any note; whilst the works of the judaizing Clement, the cabalistic fancies of Barnabas, and the wild reveries of Hermas, were publicly read in the churches. Neither have we any true record of the earliest ages, as is univer-

1) See Whateley's Logic, Appendix, Art. Old, p. 359, Eng. ed.

sally admitted and confessed by Eusebius and Jerome.[1] Those very points on which there was then the most universal consent, as for instance the doctrine of the millenium, the practice of giving the eucharist to infants, and the carnal intercourse of the angels with women, are now universally condemned as unscriptural and unapostolical.[2] And just as it was by their agreement as to the canonical books of scripture, and their acknowledgment of them as the rule of their faith and practice, these early churches were enabled to ascertain the truth or falsity of any opinion; so is it by these same scriptures all systems must now be tried, the rule being necessarily clearer and more authoritative than any thing which appeals to it as a ground of certainty and proof. Otherwise our faith would rest on tradition, and tradition — not the Bible — would become our rule of faith.

### § 3. *On the delusion as to the character and amount of the testimony of the fathers.*

So much as to the value of the patristical testimony. But we are under no less delusion as to its character and amount. On this subject we might say much, but it is unnecessary, since the treatise of Daillé,[3] and of Mr. Goode,[4] are both published in this country, and are accessible to all. The tradition of the fathers, commonly called the universal church, even if harmonious and ascertainable, would not be an infallible reporter of the oral tradition of the apostles, for the reasons already assigned.[5] There is nothing upon which the faith of all private christians can *less* rely, than this pretended universality, and that for these reasons: 1. Because it does not appear what is that universal church whose faith is to be the rule. 2. Because it is not known what is the faith of that church. 3. Because it is not manifest whether the faith of any church assignable be true.'[6] But were it otherwise, and were such a consentient judgment of the fathers authoritative, it is not possible that such an agreement can be ascertained.[7] Let it be supposed that the famous canon of Vincentius was

1) See admissions in Jameson's Sum of the Episc. Controv. p. 181; Euseb. Eccl. Hist.; Pref. Jerome's Ep. to Dexter; Petavius, Rationar. lib. v. part i. c. 3.

2) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. p. 500; Letters on the Fathers, p. 68.

3) A Treatise on the Right Use of the Fathers, Lond. 1841.

4) Goode's Div. Rule of Faith and Practice, 2 vols. 8vo.

5) See Goode, vol. i. pp. 167, 177, 181, and Daillé, B. ii. c. 1 and 2.

6) Placette in Goode, vol. i. p. 177.

7) See Goode, as above, pp. 160–185, and Daillé, B. i. c. 9–11.

binding, and that that is true which was believed always, every where, and by all; yet when wise men consider this way, with all those cautions and limitations set down by him, they are apt to think he hath put men to a wild-goose chase, to find out any thing according to his rules, and that St. Augustine spake a great deal more to the purpose, when he spake concerning all the writers of the church, 'that although they had never so much learning and sanctity, he did not think it true because they thought so, but because they persuaded him to think it true, either from the authority of scripture or some probable reason.'[1] In the first two centuries there were no full or satisfactory creeds, and certainly none which contain any thing as to the subject of the present controversy. Neither were there, during that time, any general councils. Neither, if there had been such, could they, in any proper sense, represent to us the faith and practice of the church universally.

The records which remain of these early times will never, therefore, justify us in deducing from them the opinions and practice of the churches universally.[2] It so happens that the whole list of the christian writers, for the first two centuries, whose works are still extant, is an exceedingly short one, comprizing about *sixteen* writers. We cannot reckon, therefore, upon one witness for every million of existing christians. These, also, and we may add the writers of the third century, formed but a very small proportion of the writers of those ages. The author of the 'Synopsis of Scripture,' speaks of 'myriads of other books without number, composed by the fathers, who, in their time, were great, and excelling in wisdom, and taught of God.'[3] But these are all lost, or destroyed. It is, therefore, preposterous to make this small number of scattered writers, the uncommissioned and plenary representatives of the universal church, for three hundred years, and to exalt their opinions into apostolic teaching. Besides, it is manifest that in these remaining works, we are permitted to see antiquity only through that medium which the ruling party in the church, that is, the clergy and the bishops, have allowed to be preserved.[4] Neither are we certain that any one treatise, and especially on points touching the ministry, has come down to us unaltered and uninterpolated.[5] We are indebted,

1) Stillingfleet's Rat. Grounds of Protest. Relig. 1665, p. 279. See this rule well exposed in the Edinburgh Review, April, 1843, p. 279, &c.

2) Goode, ibid, p. 187, &c. and Daillé, B. i. ch. ii. iii.

3) Goode, ibid, pp. 187, 188.

4) Ibid, p. 192.

5) We know the contrary, as it regards Ignatius; see also, generally, our position maintained by Nolan's Catholic Char. of Christ. pp. 154, 172;

be it remembered, to the Romanists, for all the earlier editions of the fathers, and while whole treatises have been suppressed, others have been grievously corrupted, and others forged, and published in their name;[1] so that *one hundred and eighty* treatises, professing to be written by authors of the first six centuries, are now repudiated, by the most learned of the Romanists themselves, as rank forgeries, or not written by the authors whose names they bear.[1] There is a mystery connected with this same business of manufacturing fathers, with which the uninitiated commonalty ought to be made fully acquainted.[2] It is not less certain that corruptions have been introduced into the genuine works of the fathers.[3] This corruption has been shown to be very extensive, and, considering the opportunities enjoyed, must have been very general.[4] Facts, therefore, plain and undeniable, show that the records which remain to us are not trust-worthy witnesses of the oral apostolical traditions. In this presumption we are countenanced by Augustine, who questioned the genuineness of one of the writings attributed to Cyprian, and supposed that another of his had been suppressed.[5] This danger was also felt by Irenæus, and by Dionysius of Corinth, who complained of this misrepresentation, by the corruption of his writings.[6] Nor can we now be ever possibly certified as to the genuineness and correctness of the patristical volumes, the time having gone by for establishing the proof, through the negligence of the early publishers.[7]

### § 4. *The testimony afforded by the fathers is discordant, and therefore inconclusive.*

But, further, these writings are discordant.[8] Fathers are found opposed to fathers, councils to councils, creeds to creeds, and the same fathers to themselves.[9] This is eminently true in reference to this very subject of prelacy, since the same writers are made to speak most clearly, as the respective parties suppose, on both sides of the question. These fathers, in some cases, falsify, even when they pretend to deliver the

Milton shows at some length, that the best times were spreadingly infected; the best men of these times foully tainted; and the best writings of these men dangerously adulterated. Ref. in Eng. Wks. vol. i. p. 15.

1) Goode, pp. ibid, 195, 199, &c.

2) Powell on Trad. Supplement, p. 23.

3) Goode, p. 200.

4) Goode, pp. 200–217, vol. i. and Daillé, B. i. c. 7, and B. ii. c. 5.

5) Ep. ad Vincent, 38, T. ii. Fol. 55, in Hampden, ibid.

6) Hampden, ibid, pp. 29, 30.

7) Ibid, p. 30.

8) Ibid, vol. i. p. 220, &c.

9) That any thing may be proved from them, see Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 123.

opinions of the apostles themselves. Thus they unanimously attributed to the apostles the millenarian scheme of Christ's personal return and reign upon the earth.[1] The eastern and the western fathers most flatly contradict each other, as to the time of observing Easter; and yet both asserted that they were sustained by express apostolic testimony.[2] The most violent controversies also prevailed, as to the propriety of rebaptizing heretics.[3] Opinions the most opposite prevailed, as to the duration of our Lord's public ministry; so that even on a question of time, respecting a most notorious and interesting subject, tradition, in a short time, spread the most variant apostolic declarations.[4] These fathers taught that Enoch and Elias would hereafter reappear on earth, at the place from which they ascended to heaven, in order to wage war with antichrist.[5] Many of them taught the absolute unlawfulness of an oath to a christian man.[6] They enjoined standing at prayer on Sundays, and during the period between Easter and Whitsuntide.[7] Ignatius, on his way to Rome, admonished the churches of Asia, 'to take especial heed to the heresies which were then springing up and increasing.'[8] Papias, also, about A. D. 110, intimates that there were those, at that time, who delivered strange and spurious precepts.[9] Hegesippus further records the same melancholy truth. And thus are we taught, that at no time were these ancient writers agreed, or free from error; and that, in testifying to the undue exaltation of the ministry, they may be well supposed to testify to an error, especially as we are assured that the fathers were in the habit of claiming the authority of the church, generally, for their own personal and visionary dreams;[10] and that even when they did assemble in general councils, they could not agree, nor prevent some subsequent council from openly contradicting their decisions.[11]

Even, therefore, in those writings of the fathers that do remain, no consent is to be looked for.[12] This has been admitted, by some of the best authors, both among the Protestants and Romanists,[13] so that, as Gregory de Valentia says, 'it must be confessed that it can rarely happen, that we can sufficiently know what was the opinion of all the doctors,'[14] and,

1) Goode, vol. i. pp. 313, 323.
2) Ibid, 323 – 330.
3) Ibid, pp. 330 – 343.
4) Ibid, pp. 343 – 345.
5) Ibid, pp. 414 – 417.
6) Ibid, pp. 417 – 421.
7) Ibid, pp. 421 – 426.
8) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. iii. 36.
9) Ibid, iii. c. ult.
10) See Goode, as above, pp. 345 – 351.
11) Ibid, pp. 351, 355, and Daillé, p. 170, &c. Eng. ed. and 322, &c.
12) Ibid, p. 395, &c.
13) Ibid, p. 356 – 358.
14) In ibid, p. 356.

as Jeremy Taylor affirms, 'there is no question this day in contestation, in the explication of which all the old writers did consent.'[1] The truth of which opinion is not only evinced by the fact, that they ever have been quoted by the most opposite parties, but that the most ancient heretics were accustomed to claim for their heresies an undoubted apostolical tradition. They were in the habit of appealing to patristical tradition as in their favor,[2] and of saying, as Jerome testifies, 'we are the sons of those wise men, who from the beginning have delivered to us the doctrine of the apostles.'[3] Besides, the rival appeals made to patristical tradition, in ancient times, on several of the most important points, were grounded on testimonies which we do not now possess, and thus any partial consent, at present found to exist, is materially reduced in value and importance.[4]

This whole appeal to the fathers, as authoritatively conveying to us the doctrine of the apostles, is based upon two unfounded hypotheses; first, that there was a steady successional delivery, throughout the whole catholic church, from one to another, in every age, of the oral teaching of the apostles; and, secondly, that in this teaching and practice, all in communion with the church, being united together as one body, and under one discipline, agreed.[5] But these are both most contrary to facts. There were, as has been shown, and that too within the bosom of the church, many heresies, errors, false doctrines, and contradictory practices; and the churches were at no time, in the early period of christianity, thus bound and compacted together, or united in their sentiments.

§ 5. *The fathers, themselves, teach us not to trust in the testimony of the fathers, as to what is scriptural and apostolical.*

And, in thus rejecting the fathers, as authoritative in deciding any question of scripture doctrine, or divine institution, we are sustained by these fathers themselves, who uniformly refer to scripture as the only certain, final, and infallible rule. 'Take from the heretics,' observes Tertullian, 'that in which the ethnics are wise, that they may settle their questions by the scriptures alone, and they cannot stand.'[6] It is necessary for us, observes Origen, to call in the

1) Liberty of Prophecying, viii. § 3.

2) Goode, as above, p. 394, &c. where see numerous examples.

3) Comm. on Is. c. 19, tom. iv. c 184, ed. Bened.

4) Goode, ibid, p. 390, &c.

5) Ibid, vol. i. p. 426, &c.

6) Tert. De Resur. Carn. c. 3.

testimony of the holy scriptures; for our senses and expositions are not entitled to faith without those witnesses.[1] 'It is a manifest falling from the faith,' declares Basil, 'and conviction of arrogancy, to set aside what is written, and add any thing that is not written.'[2] 'Let him be accursed,' declared Ambrose, in the council of Aquileia, 'who adds any thing, or takes any thing from scripture: all the bishops said, let him be accursed.'[3] 'Except by the apostles,' declares Jerome, 'let whatever else has been said be rejected; let it not have authority.' 'Although any one be holy after the apostles, although eloquent, let him have no authority.'[4] 'If any thing,' declares Augustine, 'is confirmed by the plain authority of the scriptures, without any doubt, it should be believed: but, as to other witnesses and testimonies, it is lawful for you to believe, or not believe them, as far as you shall consider them to have, or not to have, weight in the forming of faith.'[5] 'We have need of the scriptures,' declares Chrysostom, 'because many have corrupted the doctrine.'[6] 'We owe that unfettered submission to the sacred scriptures, that we follow them alone, as we have no doubt that the authors of them have neither erred in them, nor inserted any thing fallacious in them.'[7] Thus Chrysostom, who calls the scriptures 'the rule of all things,' that is, of all religious truth, says, 'a rule receives neither addition or diminution, otherwise it ceases to be a rule.' And Basil, reproving Eunomius for saying that the creed, while he called it a standard and rule, needed an addition to make it more accurate, observes that this is the extreme of folly, for that 'a standard and rule, as long as nothing is wanting to them to make them a standard and rule, admit no addition for greater accuracy. For an addition is wanting only to supply a defect; but if they were imperfect, they could not properly be called by these names.'[8]

§ 6. *Prelatists themselves teach us, that even the universal consent of the fathers is not sufficient to establish any doctrine or practice.*

And, if we could suppose the fathers were generally and thoroughly in favor of prelacy, yet what would this conclude

1) Origen, in Ierem.
2) Basil. De Confess. Fid.
3) Ambros. Ep. 8, Gest. Conc. Aquil. c. 795, d.
4) Hier. in Ps. 88, tom. vii. p. 110.
5) Aug. Ep. 112, cf. contr. Faust. Manich. lib.
6) Chrysost. Hom. i. in Matt. cf. in Ps. 95, in Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. p. 66.
7) August. Ep. 19, ad. Hieron.
8) See also August. de Unit. Eccl. c. 3.

against the truth as established by the word of God. Do not our opponents themselves teach us to set at nought even such a unanimous judgment of the fathers, by their reprobation of what was thus acknowledged? Thus, to give an instance or two, in their own words;[1] in the famous question of the virgin's immaculate conception, though the fathers are acknowledged to be generally against it, and the Romish bishop Canus[2] reckons up St. Ambrose, St. Austin, St. Chrysostom, and a great many more, who expressly assert, 'her being conceived in original sin,' and says, 'that this is the unanimous opinion of all the fathers who happen to make mention of it;[3] yet he declares this to be a very weak and infirm argument, which is drawn from the authority of all the fathers, and that, notwithstanding this authority, the contrary opinion is piously and probably maintained and defended in the church.'[4] Bellarmine also says, 'they are not to be reckoned among catholics,'[5] who are of another opinion; though this other opinion, it seems, was that of all antiquity. Thus, at other times, Bellarmine shifts off the authority of St. Cyprian, when he plainly opposes that of the pope, and says, 'that he mortally erred and offended in so doing;'[6] and concerning Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and others, 'their opinion, (he says,) cannot be defended from great error;'[7] that is, when it is against his own. Of St. Jerome he also says, 'he was of that opinion; but it is false, and shall be refuted.'[8] And, to mention no more, (though Romanists stick not upon all occasions to slight and contemn antiquity, when it will not make for them,) Baronius, one of their greatest searchers into antiquity, but as great a corrupter of it, who had taken that oath, I suppose, prescribed by pope Pius IV. not to receive or expound scripture but according to the uniform consent of the fathers, yet doth unwarily, but ingenuously confess, that 'the holy fathers, whom, for their great learning, he justly calls the doctors of the church, yet the catholic (that is Roman) church doth not always follow, nor in all things, in the interpretation of scripture.'[9]

What then does all this bombastic eulogy of the fathers, and this reverend submission to their authority, come to? Let them but breathe a sentiment, discordant to this prelatic theory of sacerdotal eminence, and they are forthwith made

1) Notes of the Ch. pp. 165, 166.
2) De Sanct. Anct. lib. vii. loc. Theol. cap. 1.
3) Ibid.
4) Ibid.
5) Bellarm. de Amis. Grat. lib. iv. ap. 15.
6) Ibid, lib. iv. de Rom. Pont. cap. 7.
7) Ibid, de Beat. lib. i. cap. 6.
8) Ibid, de Pont. Rom. lib. i. cap. 8.
9) Baron. Annal. Eccl. ann. 34. n. 213; Colom. p. 218.

to feel the weight of prelatic vengeance, and are taught to bow their haughty spirits to the supremacy of church authority. Let Aerius attempt to bear testimony against this system, as a novelty, an innovation, and as thus contrary to scripture, and he is soon condemned as a heretic, and his noble testimony branded with all the vituperation which insulted power can heap upon it. Let even the learned Jerome, prince of fathers and divines, lift his venerable head in protestation against this enormous fraud upon the rights of presbyters, and there is not an underling in the prelatic host, that does not feel himself at liberty to beard him with the charge of ignorance and mistake. We can hear even a German renegade[1] assault him, as being 'misled by an ambiguity of words,' though such a perfect linguist, 'and an inaccurate acquaintance with the condition of the primitive church,' though nearer to it by some thousand years than his bold critic, and though he wore out his life in the vain pursuit of traditionary legends. But when this same father sacrilegiously exalts the dignity of the priesthood, then 'St. Jerome was right, in thinking that the prosperity of a church depended on the dignity of its chief priest.'[2]

## § 7. *The testimony of the fathers, according to their ablest advocate, not applicable to this prelatic controversy.*

But, to crown all, it is admitted, even by Vincentius himself, that the application of this universal consent of all the fathers, as a test of truth, cannot be of any service in the detection of error, except when *it is new and upstart.*[3] 'Neither yet,' says he, 'are heresies always, nor all, after this sort, to be impugned, but only such as are new and upstart.' Confirmed and long-established errors 'we must not otherwise convince, but only, if need be, by the authority of the scriptures.' Prelacy, therefore, being a long-established error, may well be expected to have a show of patristical authority; and presbytery, being neither new nor upstart, the claims of both systems to apostolicity must be tried by the scriptures of truth. He also excludes, by special limitation, all questions touching church government, ceremonies, and rituals, in a word, the whole question of what are termed church principles, from the determination of this celebrated rule. 'Ancient consent of holy

1) Saravia on the Priesthood, p. 223.

2) Ibid, p. 259.

3) See his Commonit. c. 28 and 30; see also in Goode, vol. i. p. 161.

fathers is not so carefully and diligently to be both sought for, and followed, in every small question of the divine law; but only, or at least especially, in the rule of faith.'[1] So that, on the very subject for which prelatists most esteem the tradition of the fathers, their own master tells them it is of no manner of use, and without authority or power, and that, for its determination, they must go to the word of God. Thus does he cut the very ground from under them, and destroy their foundations.

§ 8. *How far the testimony of the fathers is to be admitted.*

We cannot, therefore, allow that the question of the divine right of prelacy or presbytery can ever be decided by an appeal to the fathers; or that any prevalence and establishment of the former, in ages subsequent to the apostolic, can afford any certainty that it was instituted by the apostles. It is only so far as this system, and the testimony of the fathers concerning it, accords with scripture, that they can have any recommendation to the reverence and obedience of christians.[2] The fathers can only be admitted as witnesses to the opinions, practices, and facts of their own times, and to their reported succession from the apostles. In this respect they are valuable, and to be treated with all the reverence and respect to which their character entitles them. As reporters of the facts of their own early age, as far as their probable information, judgment, and integrity qualified them so to be, and as far as we may feel confidence in possessing their unadulterated testimony, they are legitimately entitled to great and deserved honor. And, so far as they agree in reference to such facts, they will have undoubted weight, in giving preponderance to that interpretation of those portions of scripture whose meaning is fairly questionable, and which such facts would imply. Were the earlier fathers, therefore, unanimously and clearly, to attest the existence of the system of prelacy, in their day, and in all their churches, prelatists would certainly be entitled to the powerful presumption thus created in favor of their interpretation of scripture; just as presbyterians claim a similar presumption, supposing the testimony to be, as they believe it is, reversed, or to be even doubtful.

1) C. 28; see Jordan's Rev. of Tradition, pp. 124, 125, who adopts our interpretation.

2) See Lond. Christ. Obs. 1837, pp 145–147; Ogilby on Lay Baptism. p. 32.

§ 9. *Our reasons for proceeding to adduce the testimonies of the fathers; and the great weight to be attached to any remaining evidence in the fathers in favor of presbytery.*

As witnesses, therefore, we are willing to examine into the testimony of the fathers on this subject. Inasmuch, too, as prelatists confidently appeal to the universal consent of these fathers in favor of their system, the production of contrary evidence, from these very writers, will afford us an overwhelming *argumentum ad hominem*, and at once destroy the force and validity of their plea. The fathers are their own chosen witnesses, produced in court, to authenticate their claims; and if, therefore, any number of these witnesses are found to turn king's evidence, and to testify against them, our cause must receive corresponding favor with all impartial judges. This presumption on behalf of presbytery, arising from the favorable evidence of any number of these fathers, will be powerfully augmented by the recollection of the fact, already proved, that the written testimony of these men has been deliberately corrupted, and interpolated by our opponents. So that if, *as they now are*, they speak favorably of the system of presbytery, it may be safely presumed that, in their original condition, they gave more unequivocal testimony to the same system.

It is acknowledged by all protestants, that the system of the Romish hierarchy is not, in many things, the simple polity of the apostolic churches. This system, it must also be admitted, began very early to manifest its approaches, and very gradually to extend, until it became the established order of the church. If, therefore, the fathers are found giving any testimony, however feeble, and to any extent, however partial, to the original character, and present diversity of the government and order of the church, — even this is more than could have been anticipated, and is abundantly sufficient to outweigh the salaried evidence of suborned witnesses, who were themselves partners in the scheme of clerical aggrandizement, and sharers in all the honors, titles, and spoils, of clerical encroachment and usurpation. It was not long before it became unpopular, dangerous, and contrary to all personal and selfish interests, to oppose the hierarchy, in whose hands, from a variety of circumstances, the wealth and power of the church were concentrated. Any testimony, then, delivered under such circumstances, and in the face of anathema, excommunication, banishment, and the brand of infamous heresy, may

well be regarded as founded in the deepest sincerity, and resting upon undeniable facts; whereas the evidence of hierarchists, being given in favor of their own order, is open to fair and serious challenge. In short, as the testimony of an enemy, given by constraint, and not willingly, is of more importance in establishing any claims, than any quantity of interested testimony, therefore do we maintain that the smallest amount of evidence, wrung by the force of uncontrollable circumstances, from the bosom of the hierarchy, from the lips of the fathers themselves, must be of more importance in establishing the claims of presbytery, than is all the opposing evidence of hierarchists, in supporting prelacy.

We do not, therefore, attempt to prove the universal consent of all the fathers in favor of our views, though, as it regards the earliest fathers, we do claim even this much. Such an attempt would be, of course, ridiculous, since it is on all hands, acknowledged, that after an insidious and gradual progress, prelacy became the order of the church, the church being the patron and the home of these fathers. All that we expect, therefore, is to point out in the language and writings of many of these fathers, enough to prove, that while they went along with the system of prelacy, and were partakers of its offices, they clearly saw and admitted that prelacy was not the original order of the church, and that it rested upon no other foundation than the authority of ecclesiastical custom.[1]

§ 10. *The expedients of prelatical sophistry, in reference to the testimony of the fathers, illustrated, in thirteen introductory cautions submitted to the reader.*

Before, however, adducing any evidence, it may be well to notice some of those expedients which have been resorted to by prelatists, in order to elude our deductions both from antiquity and scripture, and of which it is necessary to apprize the reader, that he may be on his guard against them.

1) On this whole subject, see Goode's Divine Rule of Faith and Practice. Daillé's Right Use of the Fathers, recently republished in England, and this country. An admirable little work, 'Letters on the Writings of the Fathers, by Misopapisticus,' Lond. 1838. Osborne's Doctrinal Errors of the Apostolical and Early Fathers. Lond. 1835. Conybeare's Bampton Lectures on the Char. Value, and Just Application of the Fathers, during the Ante Nicene Period. Oxf. 1839. Dr. Hawkins, on Unauthoritative Tradition. Whateley's Dangers to the Christian Faith, pp. 131, 132, 141, &c. Lond. Chr. Observer, for Aug. 1840, p. 460, &c. Chillingworth's Wks. vol. i. pp. 412, 413, &c. Robert Hall's Wks. vol ii. p. 72. Whateley's Kingdom of Christ, essay ii. pp. 137, 151. Eng. ed. Also, Dr. Ibbott on the Authority of the Ancients, in the Boyle Lect. Fol. vol. ii. p. 832, &c.

1. The first of these fallacies we shall mention, respects the enumeration of church officers, by the fathers. When these writers enumerate the *officers* of the church, under the names of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, it is immediately *concluded* that, as these names indicate, in the prelatic system, three *orders of the ministry*, therefore these fathers believed in three orders of one ministry. But this is a gross assumption of the whole matter in debate. For presbyterians also believe that Christ instituted bishops, presbyters, and deacons in his church, and therefore they still retain these names and officers. But they deny that in *scripture, or the earliest writers*, these terms were applied to three orders in the ministry. They maintain that bishops and presbyters were names of one and the same order of ministers, while deacons were not an order of ministers at all, but only a class of ecclesiastical officers. Many also believe that there were presbyters, who acted as rulers only, and not as teachers, and who may, therefore, in any such enumeration of the three classes of church officers, be understood by this term. But, even disallowing this opinion, and bearing in mind the fact that, in the earliest churches, there were a plurality of ministers, as well as other officers, these three terms may refer, — the two first to the president and his co-presbyters; and the last to the deacons. The question, therefore, is, in which of these senses the fathers did actually use these terms; and inasmuch as they are confessedly employed throughout the scriptures, in the presbyterian, and not in the prelatic sense, we demand some *positive* evidence that the fathers *had altered* the meaning attached to these words.

2. The second of these fallacies we shall notice, respects the assumed omissions of these fathers in the enumeration of church offices. If the theory of presbyterians is correct, then we might expect to find that the officers of the church would be sometimes enumerated under two heads, bishops or presbyters, and deacons; and sometimes under three, as bishops, presbyters, and deacons; and that sometimes the ministers should be all called bishops, and sometimes presbyters. Now such is the actual fact, as we have seen, in scripture,[1] and such also is the case in the early fathers. On the prelatic system, however, we never could expect to find the officers of the church ranked under two denominations, since its essential feature is, that the orders of the ministry are three, distinct, necessary, and all-important orders. Prelatic

1) See B. i. c. iv. § 6.

reasoners, however, 'appear to value more highly what a writer has not written, than what he has written. They place more reliance upon the silence, than upon the speech, of a witness. They supply all deficiencies out of their own ingenuity,' and thus, when we are told that bishops and deacons are the officers known in Christ's church, they make bishop include presbyters by some prelatic figure of speech, or kindly intimate that the writer recognised in himself a superior order, and only noticed those which were inferior. And in order to color over this sophistical legerdemain, they point their readers to those other passages in which the *three terms* are used, but where there is manifestly no implication of three *orders* of the ministry. Thus Clement Romanus, whenever he alludes, with any distinctness, to the officers of the church, speaks only of bishops or presbyters, and deacons: and in order to evade the force of his testimony, we are pointed to an obscure passage, in which he alludes to the Jewish hierarchy, but where there is no foundation, whatever, for prelatical pretensions.[1]

Connected with this is another fallacy, founded on the present meaning of the terms order, office, and grade; in concluding, that when the fathers speak of different *orders*, &c., they also meant classes of officers entirely distinct in power, and authority, and original divine institution. Now it will be found, on the contrary, that as these fathers used the titles of the ministry interchangeably, so do they employ these terms without any special distinction, and, in fact, as synonymous. The words *ordo*, *officium*, and *gradus*, are, in the fathers, used promiscuously.[2] They only meant by these terms to designate different *classes* of persons, without employing any divine authority for the arrangement. They are given to readers, janitors, exorcists, and sub-deacons, just as readily as to deacons, presbyters, or bishops.[3]

3. A third fallacy, to which our brethren of the prelatic sect are addicted, is, to date the testimony of the fathers from a period earlier than can, with any reason or probability, be granted to them, and thus to attribute to the first century what properly belongs to the second, and so on. To this unfair mode of calculation, they add the most unreasonable delusion of embodying in these fathers all the antiquity, experi-

1) See his testimony, and on the subterfuges of prelatists, Boyse's Anct. Christianity.

2) See Bingham's Eccl. Ant. B. ii. c. 1, p. 17. Bp. Taylor asserts the same thing. See in Powell, p. 88.

3) See Cyprian, Ep. 33, 34, 24. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 43. Jerome's Wks. vol. v. fol. 41. In Powell, p. 88.

ence, and knowledge of the last eighteen hundred years. The truth, however, is, as has been seen, that the fathers, of all christian writers, had the least experience, and are the least entitled to any weight derivable from age. They were the first conscript soldiers of the cross. Their lives were spent upon the battle-field. They had but little opportunity for meditation and composition. Their intercourse was limited, and their capacity to give testimony, as to universal customs, exceedingly small.

4. A fourth expedient resorted to by the advocates of the prelatical denomination, is, to elevate the writers of the third, fourth, and following centuries, to an equality with those of the first and second. Now upon any question which involved *opinions*, it may be quite true, that the later fathers were better *doctors*, and possessed of more learning and knowledge, than the earlier; and may, therefore, be much more able to persuade us by the strength of their *arguments*. But in any question of *fact*, as to what was taught or instituted by the apostles, the earlier must take immeasurable precedence of the later writers. Such things can only be proved by the testimony of ear and eye witnesses. All subsequent testimony can only be report. The later fathers, therefore, are not competent to give evidence in the case before us. They had not the means of fully knowing the facts. They were also so circumstanced as to be very liable to deception, as to the truth in the case. Whatever, therefore, may be their *character*, we must utterly deny their *competency*. There was, too, every thing to induce these men to *impute* views and practices on this subject to the apostles, which they never approved; and were they, therefore, even *competent* witnesses, we should question their credibility on a point which involved their own personal interest, pride, and station.

5. Nearly connected with this fallacy is the general practice of prelatists, in commencing their examination of the fathers with those of the fourth or fifth centuries, and then making *their* testimony, *their* interpretation, and *their* definition of terms, explain the testimony of the earlier ages, and these again the testimony of scripture. But this conduct is most preposterous and unbearable. We allow that, in the fourth century, the corruptions of prelacy had become generally established, but we deny that they existed in the apostolic age, or that the same words then indicated the same things. We altogether reject the authority of the church, when corrupt, to interpret the laws and customs of the church when pure.

The only reasonable course is, to ascertain the meaning of terms, in the original charter and institution of the church, and then to carry with us, to the explanation of the fathers, these unquestionable data. Otherwise, papists may as well take the customs and definitions of the church *now*, and, tracing backwards, apply these meanings to the interpretation of terms in all preceding ages, and thus make the scriptures, and all intermediate ages, teach what their church teaches now. But every one knows that it has been the policy of the Romish church to attach erroneous and improper meanings to scriptural terms, (as, for instance, penance to repentance, and priest to presbyter,) and thus make scripture authenticate their errors. And, in like manner, do prelatists blind their readers, by telling them that, as bishop *now* means prelate, in the later ages of the church, so, whenever we find it in the earlier fathers, it must indicate the highest of their three assumed orders. But, as bishop, in scripture, *does not* mean prelate, but presbyter, it must also be held to mean the same thing in the fathers, until we find evidence that they had unrighteously, and in utter contempt of God's word, and in defiance of the express determination of the Holy Spirit, altered it. In like manner would prelatists have us believe that the bishop's parish, duties, and functions, in the early fathers, are denoted by the terms expressing them in a later age, and which had then assumed a meaning entirely different. It is absurd, therefore, to commence with the fathers of the fourth century, since we must commence at the beginning. For it will be observed that these prelatical writers do not only appeal to the later fathers, as witnesses of the facts concerning *their own age*, but for their opinion also of what is to be understood by scripture. 'When we hear them,' says Mr. Sinclair, 'bearing witness not merely to the actual existence, *but to the apostolical institution of the episcopal order*, is no attention due to their evidence? no weight or value to be attached to their testimony?'[1] Now these fathers might as well be produced as witnesses to facts in the age of Moses, or of Adam, since in either case they could only *report* what they had *heard*.

6. Another and most gainful fallacy of the prelatical church, is entirely to misrepresent the real question at issue, and thus completely to blind the eyes of their readers, and induce them to believe that they have proved *their* claims, when they have only authenticated ours. Thus they tell us the whole question is, whether or not episcopacy is of apos-

1) Sinclair's Vind. of the Episc. or Apost. Succ. p. 75.

tolic institution; whether there have always existed in the church bishops, priests, and deacons; and whether bishops have not always presided over the presbyters and deacons. Now this is mere child's play. Presbyterians claim to possess the primitive episcopacy; to have bishops, presbyters, and deacons; and to have bishops who preside over the other presbyters and deacons. The true and only inquiry, therefore, is, did the apostles and early fathers recognise *diocesan episcopacy?* — did they believe in three distinct and separate *orders* of the *ministry?* And was their president a parochial pastor, or a diocesan prelate? Any man who will examine scripture and the first fathers, with this distinction in view, will at once perceive, that, while they do prove the existence of a prime presbyter, *or president*, they utterly disavow any thing like *a diocesan prelate.*

7. Another gross deception with which prelatists delude many minds, is, to select a few out of many existing divines; to interpret them according to the rules already laid down; and then to make them speak in the name of the universal church, as if the millions of their contemporaries, who really constituted the church, had delegated to them their opinions, their knowledge, and their rights. Or, as if it were wonderful that, in all the volumes of the fathers, they should find some passages in favor of a system so zealously patronized by those, in whose hands their works were deposited for centuries, and through whom they have come down to our times.

8. Equally fallacious is the habit of representing those fathers who do testify to the existence, and who speak favorably of the institution, of episcopacy, as thereby declaring that it was of divine right, or essential to the being of a church, or the necessary mark of a true one. But, between these two extremes, there is as wonderful a difference as between Cranmer and Laud.[1]

9. A practice equally common and more criminal, is that of misrepresenting the true meaning, and mistranslating the actual words, of the fathers, so as to make them speak favorably to prelacy, when their testimony is most against it. Of this they have been frequently convicted by their own more liberal brethren.[2] Of this, archbishop Wake, as we shall show, is also guilty, in his translation of the apostolical fathers,

1) See our distinction insisted on by Perceval on the Roman Schism, p. 29.

2) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. p. 66, &c., and vol. ii. p. 256, &c. Letters of the Fathers. pp. 184, &c., 192–197, 200–212. Ancient Christianity.

in rendering the original term, πρεσβύτερος, *presbyter*, wherever it might favor prelacy, and by the words *aged man, senior or elder*, where it would, as manifestly, support the claims of presbytery.

10. Another weapon employed to parry off the testimony of the fathers, is the practice of making their *partial* statements exclude their *full* declarations; and their expressed approval of the existing prelacy of the church, to destroy their equally clear avowal of the opinion that prelacy was not the first form and order of the church as instituted by Christ. Thus, because Chrysostom was a prelate, and went along with the church, in her *then* constitution; and because Jerome also acquiesced in the existing order of things, and recommended a corresponding conduct; therefore no credence is to be given to the wholesale repudiation of the prelatic claims to apostolicity by Jerome, or to the testimony of Chrysostom, and other similar writers, who speak favorably of presbytery. Now what we are to look to in the fathers evidently is, not expressions of approbation of a system then authoritatively imposed; but the calm and impartial testimony of these writers to what, in their view, was the form and order of the church, *as instituted by the apostles*. And should there even be found, in some of those from whom we shall hereafter quote, observations in other parts of their works, which appear not altogether consistent with what they have clearly expressed in the passages we have cited, still, if our views are evidently maintained by them in those passages, and the principle, there contended for, shall appear, upon that examination which we challenge, consistent with the general tone of their remarks and mode of arguing, then such apparent inconsistency, however it is to be accounted for, is not sufficient to make such authors our opponents; or even to deprive us of the evidence in our favor, afforded by the passages we shall quote; especially when we consider that the testimony given in our favor, is, in general, expressed in a direct recognition of the claims of scripture,[1] and contrary to their popularity or interest.

11. And where prelatists cannot in this way get over the palpable testimony of any father, to the truth and order of Christ's church, they have no scruple whatever to brand him as a heretic, and with every other opprobrious name, and to extend their anathemas to all who embrace or confirm his opinions. Thus it is that we everlastingly hear of the fatal

1) Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 261.

heresy and schism of Aerius, while there is no manner of foundation for the charge, and while many of the foremost writers of the church have approved of his judgment. It is thus that the cry of 'mad dog' is raised against presbytery, and the rabble rout excited, in their ignorant frenzy, to pursue and kill.

12. To this calumnious aspersion of our principles is added the wonderfully convincing argument, that our church, *as reformed*, has existed only *since the reformation;* while the papacy, in all its corruptions, and the prelacy, in all its conformity to them, flourished in all their rank luxuriance throughout the putrid ages of the middle and earlier centuries. It is amazing how efficacious this outcry, together with the pleas of fashion and popularity, have been, in resisting the force of truth, and in perpetuating the system of the prelacy.

13. And in order to cover their designs, and give full weight to these suggestions, a careful distinction is held forth between popery in its essential principles, and popery in its accidental connections with the church of Rome. The former existed, in its embryo state, even in the times of the apostles, and continued to grow until that which hindered, (that is, the Roman empire,) was taken out of the way. The latter was manifested only at a later period, when Rome became metropolis of the church, and when universal dominion and the sole right to deal in existing abuses, were monopolized by her bishops. And thus it is, that because prelacy can be shown to have existed prior to the *Romish* papacy, it cannot, we are gravely told, be chargeable with any manner of acquaintance with *Popery!* But the power which assumed the prerogative of Christ, and undertook to legislate for his church, and to institute new offices, and to tamper with scripture officers and their titles, THIS WAS POPERY, WHENEVER IT COMMENCED, and to this character the prelacy, in its high-church phase, must be regarded as indisputably entitled.

But enough. We only request the reader to carry with him, into the examination of this whole subject, and especially the testimony of the fathers now to be produced, the recollection of these multiplied artifices of our opponents.

# CHAPTER II.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS TO THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE TRUE MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION.

### § 1. *Classification of the fathers.*

The fathers may be arranged under the following classes, according to the age in which they flourished. I. The apostolical Fathers, or those who lived nearest to the time of the apostles, and were conversant with the disciples of the apostles, or with christians taught by them. These extend over a period of about one hundred and fifty years after Christ, from A. D. 71 to A. D. 140,[1] and include Clement Romanus, Polycarp, Ignatius, Barnabas, and Hermas.[2] II. The primitive Fathers, or those who lived from the period of the apostolic fathers, to the end of the third century after Christ; including Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Cyprian, Firmilian, and Novatus. III. The later Fathers, or those who lived from the beginning of the third to the end of the sixth century. IV. The Schoolmen, or the fathers and eminent divines who flourished during the middle ages, and to the period of the reformation.

### § 2. *The true value of the apostolical fathers.*

In order to understand the value to be attached to the testimony of these apostolic fathers, we must carefully remember the positions they are brought to prove. Prelatists then affirm, that it is evident to all men diligently reading these ancient authors, that there were, ever since the apostles' days, *three orders of ministers* in the church — prelates, presbyters,

1) Clarke's Succ. of Sacred Literat. vol. i. p. 90.

2) Archbp. Wake's Ap. Fath. Prel. Disc.

and deacons, and that these three are, by divine right, separate and distinct, so that the one cannot perform the functions of the other. It must, therefore, be proved from these fathers, that the pastors of several congregations, in each of which all the parts of the ordinary worship of God, were carried on, and the sacraments administered, ought to be subject to one prelate, who should be the governor of these pastors and these several congregations, to whom belong *exclusively* the powers of confirmation, ordination, excommunication, and jurisdiction; that there should be, under this order, two other orders *of ministers*, the presbyters, and deacons; that this system notoriously prevailed in the catholic church, during their time, up to the very age of Christ and his apostles; and, that all these fathers unanimously teach this system, under the specific aspect of doctrines and practices, which, in their time, were universally believed to have descended from the apostles.[1]

Now, to give their testimony to these facts, these fathers, it must be allowed, were perfectly competent. They are most worthy and credible witnesses. They lived in the age of the apostles; were, some of them, their contemporaries; were instructed by them in the faith; are mentioned in the inspired writings; and were, perhaps, appointed to their respective churches at Rome, Antioch, and Smyrna, during the lives of the apostles. They were men of high dignity and authority in their own times. They were eminent for their piety, courage, and constancy. They were endowed, *probably*, with many extraordinary gifts and graces. They sealed their testimony to the truth by their death. And their writings were afterwards publicly read in the churches.[2] But not only are these fathers thus fully competent to give testimony to the positions affirmed, they *alone*, of all the fathers, are thus competent. The demonstration of *primitive* practice must be deduced from the *truly primitive* fathers. It is vain to heap quotations from the writers of an age, when the controverted policy had been established. The proof, that prelacy existed in the latter part of the third, in the fourth, and fifth centuries, can never prove, that it was established by the apostles, and that, *as such*, it existed from the beginning. The only fact to be established is, that this prelacy was instituted by Christ and his apostles, and that, as such, it was universally received by the earliest believers. Now, if this fact can be substantiated,

1) See Faber's Diff. of Rom. B. i. ch. vi. pp. 206, 228.

2) See Archbp. Wake's Prel. Disc. to Ap. Fath.

or made clear from the testimony of scripture, and of the apostolical and primitive fathers, then all subsequent testimony is superfluous; and if it cannot, then all such testimony is irrelevant and vain.[1] The ancient testimony is the only sufficient evidence in the case. And if this testimony is, to say the least, ambiguous, or if, to say the truth, it is clearly opposite, as a whole, to the exclusive pretensions of the prelacy, then is it most certainly absurd and nugatory to seek, in any later writers, for the substantiation of these prelatic claims; since the only point to be decided is, not the teaching of the church in *a later* age, but *in the days of the apostles*, and their *immediate* successors.

If the early christians recognised this prelatic theory of the ministry as so all-important as it is made by prelatists, we may certainly expect to hear them clearly inculcating and defending it.[2] And if this expectation is met by the fact of remarkable and admitted silence, both in scripture and the earliest writers, the conclusion is inevitable, that no such views were entertained.

It is impertinent to ask us to show, in the apostolical fathers, any condemnation of prelacy, in terms, since, as we believe, the system, in its full development, was as much unknown to them as are our railways. It is enough, if, by their silence, they give manifest proof, that they never thought of the present vaunted system of diocesan episcopacy; and that they thus condemn it, implicitly, virtually, and consequentially, by positively attesting to the existence of presbytery.[3]

Besides, the writings of these fathers are the only writings now extant, not spurious, which we have, after the New Testament, till the middle of the second century. We have, therefore, no other witnesses but them for fifty years, at least, after the death of the last of the apostles. Whatever could be certainly known, therefore, of the opinions and customs of the apostles, *must* have been known to them. Whatever written traditions of those opinions and customs of the apostles remain, *must be* preserved to us in these writings. Later writers could have no personal knowledge of these things. Their accounts, therefore, can, at best, be only the report of the reports of these fathers, concerning what was the case fifty or sixty years before. Only those who lived at the very

1) See Faber on the Diff. of Rom. B. i. ch. i.

2) Such is the analogous argument of Mr. Faber. Diff. of Rom. B. i. ch. ii. (2) p. 21.

3) See Professor Ogilby on Lay Baptism, p. 73, and Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 29, 30, Eng. ed.

beginning could have any certainty, that any given opinion or practice, not recorded in the scriptures, was apostolic. On their report the next successors were obliged to build their faith. On the report of these, that they had correctly reported the truth of such apostolic origin, the next succeeding age would necessarily depend. And thus, while there might be ultimately an infinite number of witnesses, they would all be found to trace back their evidence to these first testators. If the evidence of these first witnesses was *written*, then will all subsequent testimony have the strength due to *it*. But, if it was left oral, then have we only the attenuated thread of an invisible report, as the foundation of our confidence. Now on this we manifestly cannot rely. For, to take an illustration, what great and grievous changes took place, on many points, and on this subject of church discipline and polity, in the church of England, within fifty years after the reformation! From Calvinistic, in doctrine, it had become Arminian, and from having avowed the principle, that all the powers of the ministry belonged equally to presbyters and bishops; that the latter differed from the former only in ecclesiastical dignity; and that all the churches of the reformation were scripturally organized; she became notorious for all the exclusiveness and bigotry of her Sandys and her Laud.[1] Even now is it a matter of fierce controversy, whether the articles of that church are Calvinistic, Arminian, Lutheran, Melancthonian, Popish, or, finally, whether they have any meaning at all;[2] whether they are to be subscribed, in a literal and grammatical sense, or in what is termed a scriptural sense, or, as Paley thinks, in the sense of the imposer, *reasonably interpreted*, or, finally, with a consent of mere acquiescence;[3] and whether the church can, or cannot, recognise as christians, ministers, or churches, those connected with any other body than herself, the Romish apostacy, and some other similar sects.[4] All this is the case as it regards formularies written and *printed*, only three hundred years ago, and in a living church. And hence, it is impossible, in any reason, to make opinions,

1) See Letters on the Fathers, p. 56, and Essays on the Church.

2) See Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. i. pp. 8, 9, and 182. Lond. Chr. Ob. 1841, p. 764. Oxf. Tracts, No. 90. Hooker's Wks. vol. i. pp. 17, 18. Hanb. ed. Oxf. Tr. vol. iv. pp. 23–36. Burnet on 39 Art. p. 10. Soames's Elizab. Age, p. 591. Newman on Roman. pp. 285, 302.

3) See What is the Meaning of Subscription, by the Rev. G. N. Woodhouse, and the admirable review of this and tract No. 90, in the Westminster Review, for July, 1842, in which these various theories of subscription, and the equally discordant theories of interpretation are fully illustrated by quotations from various standard authors.

4) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. Lect. i. and notes.

or practices, which were prevalent in the third and following centuries, when printing was utterly unknown, any standard by which to test the opinions or practices of the apostolic age. While, therefore, in no age, are we to receive the doctrinal opinions of the fathers, as the rule or standard of faith; it is plainly impossible to receive the witness of any age, as to the probable institutions of Christ and his apostles, except the apostolic.[1]

> Thus first traditions were a proof alone,
> Could we be certain such they were — so known;
> But since some flaws in long descent may be,
> They make not truth, but probability.[2]

## § 4. *The testimony of Clement Romanus.*

Clement, who was called Romanus, because he was bishop of Rome, A. D. 91 or 93, and who is supposed to be the individual referred to in Phil. 4: 3, has left us an epistle to the Corinthians, which is allowed to be genuine.[3] The object of this epistle, which was written in the name of the whole church of Rome, was, like that of the apostle Paul to the same church, to compose some dissensions which had taken place respecting their teachers or governors.[4] This object Clement himself explicitly avows.[5] He also makes known, with equal clearness, that the Corinthian church had been 'led into a sedition against its presbyters,' so that its teachers or governors were presbyters.[6] There were also, as it appears, several of these teachers or governors in the Corinthian church;[7] and therefore, even were they not *called* presbyters, we must conclude that they certainly were not prelates, since there can only be one prelate in one diocese. This is plain also from what Clement says, when he requires them to be in subjection to their rulers, τοις ἡγουμενοις, and to give the honor that was due to their presbyters. That

1) See Daillé, pp. 2, 5, 6, 169.

2) Dryden, Rel. Laici, vol. i. 405.

3) 'The only genuine work of any uninspired christian writer, of the first century, now extant.' Riddle's Eccl. Chron. Lond. 1840, p. 13, by an Episcopalian.

4) Wake's Prel. Disc. § 13, p. 61. Clarke's Sacred Lit. vol. i. p. 91.

5) 1 Ep. to Corinth. § 47.

6) See § 47. Also, § 57, and § 3, where Archb. Wake translates presbyters, 'the aged.'

7) In § 47, these ministers are spoken of in the plural, as 'presbyters.' So also, in § 21, 'let us respect the presbyters,' τους πρεσβυτερους, præpositos nostros.' See Cotelerius, tom. i. p. 161. Here, again, Archb. Wake hides the sense, by rendering it, 'the aged.' So also, in § 44, 'those presbyters,' 'some who lived reputably amongst you from the ministry.' So also, in § 57.

8) In § 1.

presbyters are here spoken of as the only ministers among them, and as rulers, is evident from the fact, that archbishop Wake, in order to obviate the necessary conclusion, was driven to the most disingenuous artifice of translating the term 'presbyters'—'*the aged*.' The same designed jesuitry is pursued in section third, where Clement illustrates the evil condition of the church by the fact, that the young men lifted themselves up against their presbyters, τους πρεσβυτερους, which further confirms our position. To the same purpose is the distinct testimony given by Clement, in section forty-two. Speaking of the apostles, he says, 'for having received their command, and being thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and convinced by the word of God, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, they went abroad publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits of their conversion to be bishops and deacons over such as should afterwards believe, having first proved them by the Spirit. Nor was this any new thing, seeing that long before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the scripture, in a certain place, I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.'[1]

He gives a similar testimony, in section forty-four, where he says, that 'the apostle foreknew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that contentions would arise about the name of episcopacy, and therefore being endued with a perfect foreknowledge, appointed the aforesaid officers, namely, bishops and deacons, and left the manner of their succession described, that so, when they died, other approved men might succeed them and perform their office.'[2] Now we have here a formal account of the officers appointed by the apostles to succeed them, in the various churches they established, and these are enumerated, as in scripture, under the two heads of bishops or presbyters, and deacons. So that, according to the testimony of Clement, there are only two classes of officers permanently established in the church. The bishops, he is so far from distinguishing from presbyters, as prelatists do, that on the

1) Archb. Wake is here guilty of most unpardonable foul play and treachery. In order, if possible to make out a reference to more orders than one, he translates the original term, διακονους, 'Deaconos,' (Cotelerius, tom. i. p. 171,) in two places *ministers*, and once *deacons*.

2) Usher translates it, '*ordinem præscriptum*.' Hammond, '*seriem successionis, catalogum*.' Dr. Barrow, 'The apostles having constituted the aforesaid, (bishops and deacons,) they withal gave them further charge, that, if they should die, other approved men successively should receive the office.' See Barrington's Wks. vol. ii pp. 163, 164.

contrary, he supposes the presbyters to have been vested with the episcopal office, and blames the church of Corinth, for having cast these presbyters, (ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς,) out of their bishoprics, or their episcopal office.[1] Episcopacy, therefore, as a superior order to that of presbyters, never entered into the mind of Clement, since he attaches the episcopal function to the order of presbyters.[2]

Mr. Faber, after adducing this testimony of Clement, has these observations:[3] 'Here, we may observe no more than two orders are specified, the word *bishops* being plainly used as equipollent to the word presbyters; and all possibility of misapprehension is avoided by the circumstance of Clement's affirmation, that the appointment of these two orders was foretold, in a prophecy which announced the appointment of exactly two descriptions of spiritual officers. 'I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their ministers in faith.' In point of evidence it matters nothing, whether Clement applied the prophecy itself correctly or incorrectly. Under the simple aspect of testimony to a *fact*, had the church, in Clement's time, universally understood and believed that *three* distinct orders of clergy had been appointed, that father could never have asserted such a form of ecclesiastical polity, to be foretold in a prophecy which announced the appointment of no more than two sorts of officers, described as being overseers and ministers. Hence, Clement seems to confirm the statement of Jerome, that 'the creation of superintending bishops did not introduce a third and additional order into the church.' To the same effect writes Stillingfleet,[4] and also Lord Barrington, who says, 'bishops, with St. Clement, are always the same with elders or presbyters, as any one must see, if they read the epistle, or, if they can doubt of it, must be fully convinced by the notes of the learned Mr. Burton upon it.'[5] Bishop Croft, in his True State of the Primitive Church, thus speaks:[6] 'now in this epistle, Clement particularly sets forth the constitution of the church, by the

1) See also § 44, 47, and 57.

2) And in proving that God designed that, in the New Testament church, there should be only bishops and deacons, from the passage in Isaiah, Clement is followed by Irenæus, who says, 'such presbyters the church nourishes, concerning whom the prophet speaks, and I will give your princes in peace, and your bishops,(episcopos,) in righteousness.' Adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. xliv. when Irenæus evidently understood no other bishops than presbyters to be intended by the prophet.

3) The Ancient Vallenses and Albigenses, pp. 558, 559.

4) Iren. p. 311.

5) Miscellanea Sacra. vol. ii. p. 154, ed. 1770. Wks. vol. ii. pp. 158, 163, 164.

6) Scott's Coll. of Tr. vol. vii. p. 298.

apostles, and what ministers they ordained in the church; to wit, bishops and deacons, he names no other; which seems to me as full an evidence as can be that there were no other orders in the church in those days, but those two; and yet we are sure there were then presbyters in the church; for Peter and John call themselves presbyters, and St. Peter calls them presbyters to whom he wrote his epistle; so that if there were but two orders, to wit, bishops and deacons, presbyters must be one and the same with bishops or with deacons; not with deacons, therefore, one and the same with bishops; one order called by two names promiscuously in scripture, as hath been showed before.'

Dr. Hammond concurs in the same judgment. 'Clement's presbyters,' says he, 'were all bishops; there was no middle order of presbyters,' that is prelatical presbyters, 'at that time.'[1] Dr. Hawkins, in his recent discourse on the Apostolical Succession, as also in his Bampton Lectures, is constrained to admit, that 'the church of Corinth, whatever may have been the cause, appears, as I conceive, from the epistle of Clement, *not to have had its bishop*, as well as its presbyters and deacons.'[2] Mr. Conybeare, also, in his Bampton Lectures, admits as much.[3] Dr. Nolan, too, most fully corroborates the opinions expressed.[4] 'So that,' adds Lord King,[5] 'there were only the two orders of bishops and deacons, instituted by the apostles. And, if they ordained but those two, I think no one had ever a commission to add a third, or to split one into two, as must be done, if we separate the order of presbyters, from the order of bishops.'

In the judgment, therefore, of the most competent episcopalian writers, the teachers or governors, referred to by Clement, were, indiscriminately, called bishops or presbyters, and were of one order only. It is, however, objected to this conclusion, that, in section fortieth, Clement recognises a threefold order, when, in illustration of the necessity of subordination and obedience in the church, he refers to the threefold ministry of the Jewish dispensation, saying, 'for the chief priest has his proper services; and to the priests, their proper place is appointed; and to the levites appertain their proper ministries; and the layman is confined within the

1) Vind. of the Dissert. ch. iii. §1. See his testimonies fully handled, in Baxter, on Episcop. pp. 100, 103, 104, 106.

2) Lond. 1842, p. 5. Bampton's Lect. p. 174.

3) P. 54. 'There is nothing,' he says, 'which could have advanced the interest of any party, or have exalted the pretensions of any order in the church.'

4) Cathol. Char. of Christ. p. 236.

5) Primitive Christ. part i. pp. 69, 70. Lond. 1691.

bounds of what is commanded to laymen.' But, as Clement was not inspired, we must be permitted to remark, that the tenor of the whole paragraph is ceremonial, legal, and Jewish, and either could have no positive reference to the New Testament, or a false one altogether.[1] Clement, however, designed, we think, to institute no parallel whatever between the orders of the Jewish and the christian churches, since he takes a similar illustration from the army, and for the same purpose, when he enumerates several orders of officers.[2] He does not name bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as analogous to the high priest, priest, and levite. When he does purposely allude to the christian ministry, it is, as has been seen, under the term bishop or presbyter. Neither does he any where, in all the epistle, in any way, allude to any superior officer or prelate, in the church of Corinth. His only object was to show, that, as there was *an* order in the ancient, so should there be *an* order preserved in the christian church, and every one in their place, perform their respective duties; for, 'in other passages of the letter, we rather meet with the free spirit of the original presbyterian constitution of the church.'[3] Besides, it has been fully shown, that the high priest was not an order of ministry distinct from priests, but was, in all cases, himself a priest; that he was the representative of the entire church; and that he is now perpetuated in Christ, who is 'the High Priest of our profession;' while the priests and levites would find their counterpart in our presbyters and deacons.'[4] The analogy, therefore, would still favor the presbyterian and utterly contradict the prelatic system. And then, too, even had there been some president at Corinth, resembling the high priest, he would not have been *a diocesan*, but only a *parochial* bishop, and therefore not a prelate, but a presbyter.'[5]

But our interpretation of this writer will be made more evidently correct, by attending to the remedy he proposes for the existing dissensions. And here we appeal to every candid mind, whether, under the circumstances of the case, every prelate, writing to the churches, would not have enjoined upon the presbyters and people, subjection to the divinely appointed

1) See Letters on the Fathers, p. 21. 'We cannot for a moment think of any such confusion of the Old and New Testament ideas, in a disciple of St. Paul.' Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 199.

2) § 37.

3) Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. p. 199.

4) See B. i. ch. xiii. § 1.

5) On this objection, see Dr. Miller, on the Ministry, 8vo. ed. p. 85. Boyse's Anct. Episcop. p. 42, &c. Henderson's Review and Consid. Edinb. 1706, 4to. pp. 378, 379. Powell Apost. Succ. 2d. ed. pp. 304, 305.

authority and jurisdiction of their prelate; and whether, the system of prelacy being then known, Clement would not also have done the same; or, if they had no prelate, have recommended the immediate appointment of such a head. But Clement did neither the one nor the other. He assumes that the church was perfectly organized, and had all the divinely instituted officers. He therefore requires their mutual subjection to God, and not to him, or to any prelate.[1] He enjoins, also, their coöperation with those whose aim and object was the preservation of peace and harmony,'[2] and who were characterized by humility.[3] He calls upon them to be subject, not to any prelate, but to one another.[4] He beseeches them to carry their difficulties in prayer to God;[5] to exercise love and charity;[6] to remember heaven, their common and heavenly home;[7] to examine the scriptures, and thus ascertain their errors;[8] and, by a voluntary sacrifice and yielding, to compromise their difficulties and restore peace to their bleeding Zion.[9]

From this epistle of Clement, therefore, six things are evident. *First*, that in his time, and in both the churches of Corinth and Rome, the only officers known to the churches were bishops, or presbyters, and deacons; *secondly*, that while Clement only mentions these two classes of officers as having been instituted by Christ and his apostles, he calls the office of the presbyters by the name of episcopacy; *thirdly*, that this was not only the order of the churches of Rome and Corinth, but that pursued every where, in all the churches planted by the apostles, so that, as Luke says, they 'ordained presbyters in every city;' *fourthly*, that throughout the whole epistle there is no allusion to the possibility, or the fact, of any officer superior to presbyters or bishops, so that, as Stillingfleet says, 'they that can find any one single bishop at Corinth, when Clement wrote his epistle to them, must have better eyes and judgment than the deservedly admired Grotius,' &c.;[10] *fifthly*, that from several passages it appears that these presbyter-bishops had the charge of only one christian community, who could unite together in all acts of worship and service, and by whom their ministers were elected to their office so that every region and country village had their own bishops and

1) See Sections 14 and 56. 'Submit not unto us, but to the will of God.'
2) See Sections 15 and 16.
3) § 17.
4) § 38.
5) § 48.
6) § 49.
7) § 51.
8) § 53.
9) § 55.
10) Iren. p. 279.

deacons;[1] and, *sixthly*, that the succession, established by the express order and appointment of these apostles, was presbyterian, and not prelatical.

The single testimony, therefore, of this most ancient of all the fathers, in this most authentic epistle, written by him as a bishop to a divided and distracted church: for the very purpose of pointing out the true order and constitution of the church, according to the apostolic model: and in which he identifies presbyters with bishops, in name, office, and powers, as the successors of the apostles; is of itself sufficient to test the correctness of our conclusion, as to the true model of the primitive and scriptural churches, and for ever to blast the divine right of prelacy.[2]

### § 4. *The testimony of Hermas and Polycarp.*

Hermas, who is supposed to be referred to in Rom. 16: 14, lived A. D. 100. He left behind him a work, entitled Pastor, written in Greek, but remaining only in a Latin version. In this he speaks of 'the elders,' (or presbyters,) 'who preside over the church,' and again, of 'bishops, that is, presidents of the churches. Then such as have been set over inferior ministries, and have protected the poor and the widows,' &c. In another passage he speaks of 'apostles, bishops, doctors, and ministers, who, through the mercy of God, have come into this building of Christ, and have managed the episcopal office, and have taught and have ministered holily and modestly to the elect of God who have fallen asleep.'[3]

From a comparison of these extracts, says Dr. Miller,[4] it will appear that *Hermas* considered *bishops* and *elders* as different titles for the same office. He speaks of *elders* as *presiding over the church of Rome:* he represents a *plurality of elders* as having this *presidency* at the same time; having

1) § 37, and all the later sections. See also Baxter on Episc. part i. and part ii. p. 19, &c.

2) On the testimony of Clement Romanus, see Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 83, &c., 2d ed.; Powell on Aposto. Succ. p. 48; The Divine Right of the Min. part ii. pp. 104–106; Corbet's Remains, p. 114; Schism, p. 126; Faber's Albigenses, p. 558; King's Primit. Ch. pp. 68, 69, &c.; Anderson's Defence of Presb. p. 181; Stillingfleet's Irenicum, pp. 310, 311; Potter on Church Government, p. 257; Plea for Presbytery. Glasgow. 1840. p. 252, &c.; Welles's Vind. of Presb. Ordin. New Haven, 1767, p. 124, &c.; Wilson's Primit. Govt. of the Church, pp. 4–6; Campbell's Lect. on Eccl. Hist. p. 77, 3d. ed. This testimony is very fully handled in Boyse's Anct. Episcopacy, pp. 32–65, where all possible objections are met and answered; Baxter on Episc. part ii, p. 19, &c.; Ayton's Orig. Constit. of the Church, p. 490; Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, pp. 192–198.

3) See the Shepherd of St. Hermas, Vision ii. § 4, and iii. § 5, 6. Also Similitude ix. 27; See the passages fully given by Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 87.

4) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 88.

used the word *bishops*, he explains it as meaning those *who presided over the churches;* and immediately after *bishops*, (without mentioning *presbyters*,) he proceeds to speak of *deacons*, that is, those who are intrusted with *the protection of the poor and of the widows.*'

As to the last quotation, it must either be interpreted in accordance with the preceding one, the terms bishop, doctor, and minister, as in scripture, being applicable to the one general order of christian ministers, whom Hermas had denominated presbyters, and who are here made to succeed the apostles; or, if it must be taken literally, then it recommends four orders of the ministry, and not three, and these, too, such as no man on earth can find or distinguish. It is apparent, that to all these officers, Hermas attributes the management of the episcopal office, and the power of the keys, and therefore they must all possess the same powers and functions. He makes no distinction whatever between the rulers and the teachers, but identifies their office. And hence we must conclude, that, in the time of Hermas, presbyters were equally called apostles, that is, their successors in the ordinary ministry of the word, bishops, doctors, and ministers, and that no other officers were known to the churches, except deacons, who attended to the wants of the poor. These presbyters or bishops, it is further evident, constituted a college, who governed, in common, the church of some single city or parish, — 'the presbyters in this city who govern the church.'[1]

Polycarp was one of the disciples of John, and bishop of Smyrna, in Asia, A.D. 108. There is preserved but one of his epistles, which was addressed to the Philippians. St. Paul, in writing to this church, directs his epistle 'to the bishops and deacons,' (Phil. 1 : 1,) as the only officers in the church at that time. That these were only presbyters and deacons, and that no other officer or order was then existent in this church, we have seen admitted by archbishop Potter.[2] Now, in a similar strain, Polycarp introduces his epistle, saying, 'Polycarp, and *the presbyters* that are with him, to the church of God which is at Philippi.' It is thus directed to the church at Philippi, and not to any superior officer or prelate. In section fifth, he tells them to abstain from all the evil things he had mentioned, 'being subject to the presbyters and deacons, as unto God and Christ.'[3] Again, in section sixth, he says, 'and let the presbyters be compassionate and merciful towards all;

1) Lib. i. Vis. 2, on Hermas's Testimony; See Dr. Miller as above; Boyse's Anct. Christ, pp. 111, 113.

2) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 107, &c.

3) See in Cotelerii Patres Apost tom. ii. p. 188.

turning them from their errors; seeking out those that are weak; not forgetting the widows, the fatherless, and the poor; abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unrighteous judgment; not easy to believe any thing against any: nor severe in judgment, knowing that we are all debtors in point of law.' Polycarp, it will be observed, uses no other term than presbyter to designate the ministerial office. He does not allude to bishops. He assigns to presbyters all ministerial authority. And he testifies that as presbyters were left in this church by apostolic appointment, so did presbyters continue to exercise there all apostolic authority, as the only ministerial successors of the apostles.

Polycarp was himself styled by Irenæus 'the apostolical presbyter,' and, after an examination of his epistle, Dr. Wilson declares,[1] 'Not a word have we yet found, nor shall we in this letter discover any thing, that bears even the semblance of a proof of any diversity of grade in the ordinary preaching office, the possessor of which was as yet indiscriminately called bishop and presbyter.' The admission of the judicial authority of these associated presbyters over their co-presbyter Valens, is not merely a renunciation of all authority on the part of Polycarp himself, but a proof also that the cognizance of such causes, and the exercise of all ecclesiastical discipline, lay, not in the hands of any prelate, but of the presbytery of the church. His petition, that Valens should not be treated as an enemy, is addressed to the presbyters, as such, and is proof positive that power was vested in the hands of the presbytery. According to Polycarp, therefore, every presbyter was a bishop; was by his commission equally set over and bound to feed and govern the flock; and was, therefore, apostolical, or a successor to the ordinary ministerial office possessed by the apostles. Polycarp, though called a prelate, was himself a presbyter-bishop. He had charge of one single church, which he ruled, and governed, and taught, and was thus as different from a modern diocesan prelate, as any presbyterian bishop who is the pastor of a city church.[2]

1) Primit. Govt. of the Ch. p. 8; See also pp. 10, 11.

2) On this testimony see Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 88; Plea for Presbytery, p. 256; Welles's Vind. of Presb. Ord. p. 128; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 7–12.

§ 6. *The testimony of Ignatius; even his smaller epistles are interpolated, especially on the subject of the ministry.*

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, is placed in the year A. D. 107, and was also one of the apostolic fathers. There are seven epistles attributed to him, called the smaller, to distinguish them from eight others, which are called the larger. The larger epistles are now universally rejected as spurious, and the forgeries of a later age. The smaller epistles are, however, as universally received, as *substantially* those of Ignatius, though there are not wanting those who think it altogether incredible, that, at that age, a man on his journey to Rome, and in the company of soldiers, could have found opportunity to compose and forward these writings.[1] These epistles are depended on by prelatists as demonstrative of their views on the subject of church government, and as in themselves abundantly sufficient to overthrow all the pretensions of presbytery to apostolical or primitive institution.

We will, therefore, more fully consider the testimony of this author. And in doing so, we will, in the *first* place, show, that even these smaller epistles are corrupted and interpolated, and are not, therefore, altogether genuine. This is the opinion of the large body of the learned of all non-episcopal denominations; and also of many episcopalian writers of eminence and impartiality. We do not design to enter into this controversy.[2] We undertake, however, to deny that even the smaller epistles ascribed to Ignatius, are *thoroughly genuine*, or *so* free of forgeries as to contain *no* chaff mingled with the wheat. There is no certainty that they have not been so corrupted. All the copies which existed previous to the publication of the old latin version of Usher, were manifestly corrupted, since they differed from each other, and from the quotations made from them by the earlier fathers.[3]

1) Salmasius, Blondel, and Daillé, regard them as spurious. Stillingfleet, in Iren, p. 298, advances the above view.

2) The reader is referred to Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, part ii. § 1–6, p. 109–164, who gives a full view of the history, and enters into the merits of the controversy. The reader is also referred to Dr. Miller, on the Min. pp. 90–92, 329. Schism, pp. 128, &c. and 517. The Divine Right of the Min. part ii. p. 106–114 Bp. Marsh's Lect. part v. p. 17. Bib. Repert. 1833, p. 354, and for 1834, p. 9. Henderson's Review and Consideration, Edinb. 1706, 4to. p. 332, &c. Plea for Presbytery, 1840, p. 93, &c. and also p. 258. Welles's Vindication of Presb. Ordn. New Haven, 1767, p. 121, and as there quoted, Dr. Chauncey's Dudleian Lect. Dr. Wilson, Primit. Govt. of the Ch. p. 7, and § vi. pp. 45–60. Chevalier's Translations of the early Fathers, Introd. p. xlvi. &c.

3) Archbp. Wake's Prel. Disc. to Polycarp's Ep. § 17, 18, p. 125.

Forgeries were, we know, very early issued in the name of many of the apostles, and apostolic fathers, as of Clement, Barnabas, and Ignatius himself. Even the first epistle of Clement has been tampered with, by the insertion of incredible matter.[1] The relation of the martyrdom of Polycarp has also, as is admitted, been interpolated, by the insertion of a story so utterly ridiculous that archbishop Wake, though inclined to swallow every thing claiming to belong to these writers, actually omits the passage, although he allows the original 'is so well attested that we need not any further assurance of the truth of it!!'[2] As to the idea that no one would then corrupt a work so known and sacred, it is altogether idle, inasmuch as Ignatius himself speaks of those who, at that very time, corrupted the sacred writings.[3]

And, as there is no improbability in their being corrupted, so it is a fact that about six hundred years after Christ these epistles were altered and perverted.[4] This is admitted, both on internal and external grounds of evidence, by many episcopalians; and also, that these alterations were made so as to render these epistles more conformable to the views of prelacy on the very points now in controversy. 'In these epistles,' says the London Christian Observer,[5] 'we have the same order of bishops, priests, and deacons, marshalled with unseasonable exactness, and repeated with importunate anxiety. There appear, moreover, so many symptoms of contrivance, and such studied uniformity of expression, that these compositions will surely not be alleged by any *capable and candid* advocate for primitive episcopacy, without *great hesitation*; by many they will be *entirely rejected*. I do not mean to insinuate that the whole of these epistles is a forgery. On the contrary, many parts of them afford strong internal evidence of their own genuineness; but, with respect to the particular passages which affect the present, (the episcopal,) dispute, *there is not a single passage which I would venture* to allege. The language, at the earliest, is that of the fourth century.' Mr. Riddle, the learned author of the Christian Antiquities, after quoting some of the expressions of Ignatius, respecting episcopacy, says, 'expressions of this kind have been reasonably regarded as the work of a later hand. It is impossible to attach any importance to any separate por-

1) As e. g. the story of Danaus and Dirce. See Jameson's Fund. of Heir. p. 114.

2) Prel. Disc. to the Rel. pp. 246, 248, 249.

3) Ep. to Philad. § 8.

4) Wake's Prel. Disc. to Polyc. Ep. § 17, and Usseri Diss. c. vi.

5) Vol. ii. p. 723.

tions of these epistles, in which it is highly probable that spurious clauses have been artfully mixed up with the genuine expressions of the apostolical father.'[1] 'Thus we see,' says another recent and able episcopalian author, 'the weight of evidence during the two first centuries, is against the three orders, which may naturally create a suspicion that these passages in Ignatius, which refer to them, are interpolations; for he stands alone in what he states, during the first two centuries, and not only alone, but opposed by the strongest authorities, during that period.'[2] 'Turning to the early ecclesiastical writers,' says another recent episcopalian reviewer, 'we find in the first ages a general agreement, only a few trifling errors are gradually discernable. Ignatius, (*if his epistles be not interpolated*,) assigns more supremacy to the episcopal office, than did the apostles.'[3] Dr. Nolan is very strong. Having declared that the prelatic system can date only from the time of Cyprian, he adds,[4] 'In the effort to trace its pedigree to an earlier date, labor is exhausted, and ingenuity tortured, to wrest every ambiguous phrase, in the writers preceding his times, in justification of the illusion, with which they are captivated. Their predecessors, among the ancients, cut out a shorter road for themselves, in pursuing the same bootless object. Finding how very reluctant St. Ignatius and the compilers of the apostolical constitutions, however full and explicit on the subject, were, in delivering any thing which made in their favor; they accordingly supplied the unpardonable deficiency of their evidence, by deliberately inserting in their writings every thing which was requisite to the establishment of a cause, which they doubtless regarded as meritorious and godly.' Neander also declares that these epistles 'have certainly been interpolated, by some one who was prejudiced in favor of the hierarchy.'

But, whether this be the case or not, certain it is that these epistles, as they now are, contain manifest errors, and even blasphemies, which must materially weaken the weight of their testimony, if they do not prove their corruption on the same grounds upon which the larger epistles are rejected, and some things attributed to Polycarp.[5] These epistles contain many wild extravagances, which show that the

1) Christ. Antiq. p. 232.
2) Letters on the Fathers, p. 67.
3) The Churchman's Monthly Rev. Sep. 1842, p. 633.
4) Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 153, 154. See also pp. 102, 173, 200–236.
5) Wake's Prel. Disc. to Polyc. Ep. § 17, 18, p. 155. Usseri Dissert. c. 10 and 11.

author was vain, credulous, and superstitious:[1] many foolish fancies, as chimerical as any rabbinical imaginations,[2] and many errors, not only in their germ, but also in full blow.[3] He puts the bishop, for instance, in the place of God, which is blasphemy, and to be held in reprobation.[4] The first ground on which archbishop Wake thinks these epistles genuine, is, 'that there is nothing in them either unworthy of the spirit of Ignatius, or the character antiquity has given of them.'[5] Now there is, as we judge, *much* that is altogether unworthy of the spirit of Ignatius, supposing him to have been a truly enlightened and devoted christian. Of this, in addition to what has been adduced, we refer the reader to other passages.[6] In one place he teaches, that 'if any one follows him that makes a schism in the church, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' which is plainly contrary to the teaching of Paul,[7] and, therefore, false. In another place he tells us, that 'whatsoever he (the bishop) shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God;'[9] and 'he that honors the bishop shall be honored of God, but he that does any thing without his knowledge, ministers unto the devil,' where he ascribes to every bishop infallibility, and constitutes him a pope. In the same epistle he claims this attribute for himself, in a style of the most vulgar profanity, 'my soul be for yours, . . . wherefore neither shall Jesus Christ be ashamed of you,' and 'I will be thy surety in all things.'[10] Nay, he even carries his presumption so far as actually to claim inspiration, and the knowledge of heavenly things, saying, 'can I not write unto you heavenly things, . . . for I am not bound in every respect, but can be able to know heavenly things, the orders of angels, their constitutions, principalities, things visible, and things invisible.'[11]

So that, on the whole, charity, justice, and truth require us to believe that these epistles have been grossly corrupted. 'And truly,' we may well say with bishop Stillingfleet,[12] 'the story of Ignatius does not seem to be any the most probable.

1) See illustrations in Ep. to the Eph. § 9, Ep. to Smyrn. § 8, 9, and 13.

2) See e. g. Ep. to Eph. § 6. Ep. to Trall. § 5. Ep. to Eph. § 19.

3) Ep. to Trall. § 3. Ep. to Eph. § 20. Ep. to Trall. § 13. Ep. to Smyrna, § 6. See all given in Letters on the Fathers, p. 34, &c.

4) Ep. to Magnes, § 2, 3, and 6. Ep. to Trall, § 2, 3, 12. Ep. to Philad. § 3, 7, 8, 9. Ep. to Smyrna, § 8, 9. Ep. to Polyc. § 6.

5) Prel. Disc. § 9.

6) Ep. to Eph. § 6, 8, 13. Ep. to Magnes. § 2, 3, 6. Ep. to Trall. § 2, 7, 13. Ep. to the Rom. § 4, 5.

7) Ep. to Philad. § 3.

8) Ep. to the Cor. 1st and 2d, and Rom. Ch. 14, &c.

9) Ep. to Smyrn. § 8, 9.

10) Ibid. § 10, and Ep. to Polyc. § 2.

11) Ep. to Trall. See the sense here given fully.

12) Iren. p. 298.

For wherefore should Ignatius, of all others, be brought to Rome to suffer, when the proconsuls and the *præsides provinciarum* did every where, in time of persecution, execute their power, in punishing of christians at their own tribunals, without sending them so long a journey to Rome, to be martyred there? And how came Ignatius to make so many, and such strange excursions, as he did, by the story, if the soldiers that were his guard were so cruel to him, as he complains they were? Now all these uncertain and fabulous narrations, as to persons, then arising from want of sufficient records made at those times, make it more evident, how incompetent a judge antiquity is, to the certainty of things done in apostolical times.' There is no way, therefore, left, but to sift the chaff from the wheat, by casting the whole into the sieve of scripture, and throwing away all but what it authenticates as pure grain, as the vile dust of oral and popish traditions; or else at once surrender, to fallible and imperfect mortals, those gifts of reason which God has granted to every man. This is the rather necessary, because there are various editions of these epistles, according to which the sense is varied, and prelatists are careful not to inform their readers what version they follow.[1]

### § 8. *The epistles of Ignatius, corrupted as they are, do not support the cause of prelacy.*

Even, however, if we take these epistles as they are, we are prepared to show that they do not support the cause of *diocesan* prelacy.[2] It is true, Ignatius speaks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. But he nowhere affirms that these are the three *orders of the ministry*. He merely states, that there were then three classes of *officers*, who were thus denominated. He does not, therefore, sustain the Prayer Book, in affirming, that, from the apostles' days, there were these three orders of *ministers*, bishops, priests, and deacons. And who, and what, was the bishop, as described in these epistles? Even supposing that he was the president, ruler, or moderator, the *primus episcopus*, the elected superintendent of the other presbyters, and the church, what then? The bishop described by Ignatius, was certainly as different from a diocesan prelate as any two officers can be. The Ignatian bishop was the presiding officer of one single congregation,[3]

1) Letters on the Fathers, p. 184.
2) See Jameson's Fund. of Hier. p. 124.
3) Ep. ad Smyrn. § 8. Ep. ad Ephes. § 5. Ep. ad Magnes. § 7. Ep ad Philad. § 2.

while the prelate is the president of any indefinite number, but certainly not of one, merely. The sacraments were not to be administered but in the presence of the Ignatian bishop,[1] while within the diocese of the modern bishop there may be any number of altars, and the sacraments administered in any number of churches, at the same time. Besides, the Ignatian bishop was required to attend, personally, to the wants of all the poor of his whole diocese.[2] Make, therefore, what you will out of the Ignatian bishop; but make out of him a diocesan prelate it is impossible for any man to do.

The bishop described by Ignatius was unquestionably the pastor of a single church or congregation, having other presbyters associated with him in its government and instruction. All the bishops named by him were fixed pastors of some particular church; Onesimus, of the church at Ephesus:[3] Demas, of the church at Magnesia:[4] Polycarp, of the church at Smyrna;[5] Polybius, of the church of Tralles:[6] and, in like manner, the bishops of the churches at Philadelphia, and at Smyrna.[7] The duties which are prescribed to the bishop, also prove the same position, beyond all controversy. Thus, in addressing Polycarp, he says, 'Let not the widows be neglected; be thou, after God, their guardian. Let your assemblies be more full; inquire into all by name: overlook not the men and maid servants.' The bishop is represented as offering up the prayers, and conducting the worship, of the whole church;[9] as often meeting his assistants, at the same time and place, for thanksgiving and praise:[10] as uniting with every one of his congregation in breaking one loaf;[11] as having no greater number of assistants than would be required by the labors of one church at that time:[12] as managing and directing all meetings:[13] as one without whose advice the people of his charge need do nothing,[14] but be with him, and follow him, as sheep, and run with him to the same altar and temple;[15] as being the common guardian of all the widows, and inquiring after the absentees from public worship, even to the maid and men servants.[16] The Ignatian

1) Ep. ad Smyrn. § 8. Ep. ad Philad. § 4. Ep. ad Eph. § 20.
2) Ep. ad Polycarp. § 4.
3) Ep. to Eph. § 1.
4) Ep. to Magn. § 1.
5) Ep. to Magn. § 15, and Ep. to Polyc. Salutation.
6) Ep. to Trall. § 1.
7) Ep. to Philad. § 1. Ep. to Smyrn. § 8.
8) Ep. to Polyc. § 4.
9) Ep. to Eph. § 5.
10) Ibid, § 13.
11) Ibid, § 20.
12) Ep. to Magn. § 2.
13) Ibid, § 6.
14) Ibid, § 7.
15) Ibid, § 7, and Ep. to Phil. § 2, and § 4, and Ep. to Smyrn. § 8.
16) Ep. to Polyc. § 4.

bishop was not, therefore, a prelate, but a parochial or presbyterian pastor, having, as was then necessary and common, other presbyters associated with him in the same charge.[1]

## § 9. *The epistles of Ignatius are favorable to the cause of presbytery.*

But, more than this, we are prepared to go further, and to assert, that these epistles of Ignatius are favorable to the cause of presbytery. For, while they do exalt bishops to a most unscriptural and blasphemous elevation, they are equally exorbitant in the claims they put forth for presbyters. This may be seen in many passages to which we refer.[2] Ignatius, also, determines the meaning to be attached to the term presbytery. He frequently uses this word, and always to signify a number of presbyters only. A few instances may suffice. In his epistle to the Ephesians he says, 'Being subject to the bishop and the presbytery.'[3] Again, 'He that does any thing without the bishop and the presbytery.'[4] Again, 'Respect the bishop and the presbytery.'[5] In all these instances, and many more that might be mentioned, it is evident, to demonstration, that the word PRESBUTERY, with Ignatius, means a number of *presbyters*, and nothing else. Ignatius further assists the cause of presbytery, by overthrowing the foundation of the prelatical doctrine of apostolical succession. Certain it is, that the title of apostle, or successors of the apostles, had not been assumed in the time of Ignatius, who 'denies that bishops are apostles,' 'though,' says Dr. Willet,[6] 'he were near to the apostles' time, being the third bishop of Antioch, after Peter, and had seen Christ after his resurrection. Writing to the Antiochians, he saith, I do not command these things as an apostle.'

A further service, which Ignatius renders to the presbyterian cause, is, the constant and unequivocal manner in which

1) The force of this evidence is admitted by both Mede and Burnet. It should seem, (saith Mede, see Proof for Churches in the Second Century, pp. 28, 29, and Burnet's Obs. on the 1st and 2nd Canon, p. 51,) that, in these first times, (before dioceses were divided into those lesser and subordinate churches we now call parishes, and presbyters assigned to them,) they had not only one altar, one church or *dominicum*, but one altar to a church, taking church for the company or corporation of the faithful, united under one bishop or pastor, and that was in the city and place where the bishop had his see and residence.

2) Ep. to Eph. § 2 and 20; Ep. to Magn. § 2, 7, 13; Ep. to Trall. § 13; Ep. to Phil. Salut. and § 4, 7; Ep. to Smyrn. § 12.

3) § 2.

4) Ep. ad Trall. p. 50.

5) Ep. ad Philad. p. 43.

6) Willet Syn. Pap. p. 273.

he represents presbyters as being the successors of the apostles, and as occupying their place, ministry, and authority in the church of Christ.[1] He teaches, that 'the deacon is subject to the presbyters, as to the law of Jesus Christ;' that 'the presbyters preside in the place of the council of the apostles;'[2] 'be ye subject to your presbyters,' says he, 'as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope:'[3] 'let all reverence the presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and college of apostles;'[4] 'being subject to your bishop, as to the command of God, and so ALSO to your presbyters:' 'see,' therefore, that 'ye follow the presbyters as the apostles.'[5] But further, Ignatius allows of no prelatical distinction between the bishop and the presbyter. Prelates claim, as we have seen, the original and *exclusive* right to preach, administer sacraments, offer public prayers, govern, and ordain. But nowhere does Ignatius appropriate these functions to the bishop, and deny them to the presbyters. On the contrary, he every where implies, that all these powers were exercised by the bishop and presbyters, *in common*, so that Polycarp could not even send a messenger to the church of Antioch, without calling together the presbyters. And if the presbyters were to do nothing without the bishop, so was the bishop to be equally dependent on the presbyters. Neither were the presbyters one whit more subjected to the bishop, than are assistant ministers or curates to their rectors: or the bishop elevated above them, any more than a senior minister is over his junior assistant, in any large presbyterian congregation. For, as his episcopacy was parochial, all the superiority the Ignatian bishop could have, was that of the presiding presbyter, in a church which employed two or more ministers, and this is far enough removed, either from diocesan episcopacy or a diocesan prelate. And if it be objected, that this implies a more numerous ministry than could have been supported, it must be borne in mind, that many, in the circumstances in which the church was then placed, neither needed nor received any maintenance at all from the church;[6] that, in the exigencies of the church, many clergymen pursued some calling, by which they procured a livelihood;[7] that they lived

1) See Ep. to Magn. § 7; Ep. to Smyrn. § 8; Ep. to Trall. § 2, 3; Ep. to Philad. § 5.
2) Ep. to Magn. § 6.
3) Ep. to Trall. § 2.
4) Ibid.
5) Ep. to Smyrn. § 8.
6) See the Apost. Constit. Canon 40; Council of Antioch, Canon 25; Chrysost. de Sacerd. Serm. 3; Ambrose Off. lib. i. c. 36; Boyse's Anct. Episc. p. 102.
7) Apost. Const. Can. 23, 24; 3rd Council of Carthage, Can. 15.

in great parsimony and frugality;[1] that many were then willing to cast their property into the hands of the church; and that, whether these circumstances account for it or not, the fact was as has been stated. The bishop and his presbyters then lived in common, dwelt in the same house, and were maintained out of the same common fund, provided by the offerings of the faithful at the communion table.[2] The church at Magnesia had thus two presbyters and one deacon, although much smaller than those of Ephesus, or Antioch. In fact, every church, then, was a kind of theological seminary and missionary institution, from which the word of God sounded abroad into all the region round about. And thus it was, also, at the reformation in Geneva, and throughout the churches of France.

Nay, further, does not Ignatius fully authenticate our claim of presbyterial ordination. By whom was ordination then performed? Certainly by the bishop with his presbyters, that is, by the presbytery. If the bishop could do nothing without his presbyters, of course he could not ordain *alone*. The bishop, *then*, had the same charge, office, and power, that presbyterian pastors now have, and he, with the other presbyters, ordained. There was, in Ignatius's time, neither prelacy, prelate, nor prelatical ordination.[3] For, even if we gratuitously suppose, that in the ordination of presbyters or bishops, neighboring bishops united, still they were but parochial pastors or presbyters; they constituted, together, a presbytery, and their ordination was still presbyterian. And if prelatists will convert the Ignatian bishop into a prelate, what will they make of it? In the epistle to the Magnesians, Ignatius is represented as exhorting them not to use their bishop, Damas, too familiarly, because 'his order appeared to be an innovation' upon their previous form of pure presbyterian simplicity, thus plainly indicating, that, in this church, at least, any superiority whatever, in the presiding presbyter over the others, had not, originally, been recognised, and that the attempt to make the bishop a higher office, was entirely an innovation.[4] This is admitted by one of the greatest ad-

1) 4th Counc. of Carthage.

2) See Paul Sarpis on Benefices, art. 1, 2, and 3; Tolet de Sacred. lib. v. c. 4, p. 722; Apost. Const. lib. ii. c. 27; Boyse, ibid, p. 104.

3) See Ep. to Philad. § 7, and Dr. Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. p. 175.

4) The words are, '*ου προσειληφοτας την φαινομενην νεωτερικην ταξιν.*' See Cotelerii. Patr. Apost. tom. ii. p. 18, and also Ignatii Ep. ed. Vossii, Lond. 1680, 4to. p. 31. And yet archbishop Wake, with unparalleled effrontery, translates these words, 'not considering his age, which, indeed, to appearance, is young.' See Burnet's Obs. on the 1st Canon, pp. 8, 9, who admits, that, from this, 'some will infer, that episcopacy was then newly invented.'

vocates of the prelacy, Dr. Hammond, who allows, that, 'before the writing of Ignatius's epistles,' the intermediate order of the ministry 'was instituted in all the churches,' there having been, before that time, only bishops or presbyters, and deacons.[1] Du Pin, also, is of opinion, that the difference between bishop and presbyter took its rise under Ignatius, while, even then, it implied only *a presidency.*[2]

Ignatius affords our cause still further help, by the fact, that whenever he is represented as superstitiously and sinfully elevating the ministerial office, he is found appealing for authority, not to the word of God, but to his own weak and fanciful visions; thus proving, that even his hierarchical corrupters could find no other basis on which to rest whatever in these epistles is favorable to their scheme.

Finally, these epistles admit, that, with all the pretensions of the bishop to such unbounded authority in the ministry, the churches, then, were not yet brought in bondage to the yoke of prelatical tyranny, since Ignatius is represented as complaining, that 'some call, indeed, their governor bishop, but yet do all things without him;'[3] that is, as hierarchists would interpret it, they exercised the free representative liberty of presbyterian churches, and their just right to call their ministers to account when they transcended the powers of their office. Grant, therefore, that Ignatius uses very inflated language, as descriptive of the ministerial office, and when he speaks of bishops, yet let Ignatius have the privilege of explaining his own meaning, (supposing these extravagances to be his, which we can never believe,) and his grandiloquence will, at once, lose all its prelatical significance, and prove as utterly worthless to the cause of the hierarchy, as it is foolish, unscriptural, and bombastic in itself. For the very same language, and grandiloquent titles and dignities, are, as we have seen, ascribed by him to presbyters, as well as to prelates, and of necessity, therefore, they cannot be made to imply any peculiar, distinct, divine supremacy in an order of prelates.

We are, therefore, left to infer, that, seeing Ignatius so unequivocally asserted the divine origin and powers of presbyters, it was found necessary, in order to obviate the force of his testimony, to interpolate his writings with the most fulsome and unapostolic panegyrics upon bishops.

These and other considerations, which might be adduced,

1) Dis. iv. p. 208, § 9; see, in Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 58.

2) Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 42.

3) Ep. to Magn. § 4.

are sufficient to prove, unless he is grossly contradictory and unworthy of any credit, that Ignatius had no conception of an order of prelates, but that he was, on the contrary, in his original form of speaking, a true believer in the primitive presbyterian constitution of the churches of Christ.[1] Even as it is, he declares, that presbyters are possessed of the powers of government, and are the true and only successors of the apostles, and occupy their places. Nay, while he only recognises the *propriety* of episcopacy, even in its parochial form, he makes presbytery an institution and law of Jesus Christ.[2] Prelacy, therefore, can find no support, either for the name, order, or powers of its prelatic order, even in these corrupted epistles. There is nothing that can, with any justice, be made to favor *diocesan* prelacy, but, on the contrary, every thing to harmonize with presbyterian parity, as is fully admitted by bishop Stillingfleet, when he affirms, that 'Ignatius himself cannot give a doubting mind satisfaction of the divine institution of bishops, when, in the only place brought to that purpose, his sense is quite different from that it is brought for.'[3]

## § 8. *Concluding remarks on the testimony of the apostolical fathers.*

That is true, says Vincentius, which was believed always, every where, and by all. Now when we ask these earliest custodiers of the deposited faith of the now sainted apostles, 'was it always, and every where, and by all the churches before and in your age, received as a part of the divine institution, that an order of prelates should have paramount authority, as the only ministerial successors of the apostles? Did this belief and practice pervade all the christian churches, and has it been so generally acknowledged, that all contrary views have been disallowed and held invalid?'—when we put these questions, under all the disadvantage of being allowed but an infinitesimal fraction of those who were in fairness, the church, and whose consent could alone fairly

1) See Salmasius in Anderson's Def. of Presb. p. 182, and Div. Right of the Min. part ii. p. 113.

2) Stillingfleet's Iren. p. 308.

3) Iren. p. 310. See p. 309. See also Jameson's Fund. of Hier. p. 134. See his testimony in full in Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 92–97, 319, and also very fully in Boyse's clear Account of the Ancient Episcopacy. Dr. Wilson's Primit. Govt. of the Ch. p. 52, &c. Pierce's Vind. of Dissent. p. iii. ch. i. pp. 64–68. Dr. Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. pp. 230–237, 173, 174, 102. Boyse's Anc. Ch. pp. 63–106. Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hier. part ii. Baxter on Episc. part ii. p. 21.

represent the *quod ab omnibus*, or *quod ubique*, or *quod semper*; and under the further disadvantage of having had our witnesses drilled and prepared for cross examination by these very prelates themselves, and some of them, at least, confessedly corrupted, and their testimony convicted of willful perjury (as for instance, Ignatius) — yet although thus brought into court, under circumstances, in which no lawyer would hazard the value of a dollar, — when we put these questions, how flatly and indignantly do these martyr-fathers repel this prelatic calumny upon themselves, upon their churches, and upon the spirit and liberty of the gospel! These venerated men have now been introduced into our presence. They have been called upon to state their views, on that very question, whose *undisputed* verity has been asserted with such unblushing effrontery. We have heard their testimony. We have listened to the declaration of Clement Romanus, ascribing to presbyters what is claimed for prelates. We have heard Hermas declare, that presbyters preside over the church. We have heard Polycarp avouch, that he was associated with the presbyters to whom he enjoins the church to be subject, using no other title *whatever* for the christian ministry. We have also learned from Ignatius, though brim-full of interpolated testimony against the truth of his own original record, that he knew nothing whatever of such an order as is here claimed; that his bishop was no other than the pastor of a congregation: and that presbyters were unquestionably entitled to spiritual jurisdiction in the church of Christ.

Such, then, is the testimony given by these apostolic fathers, and that too after coming through the expurgatorial fires of prelatic jealousy, during as many centuries, — to the *quod semper*, *the quod ubique*, *and the quod ab omnibus*, — as it regards the rights and power of presbyters, and the assumed prerogatives of the prelatic hierarchy. And now, in making our appeal to our readers, as honest, impartial, and reasonable men, we call upon them to give a judgment — and that on the very principles of our opponents — in favor of presbyters and against prelates, and to God shall be the praise and the glory.

It may be well to throw together a few testimonies, in addition to those already adduced, in confirmation of our interpretation of these writers. Speaking of Clement, the illustrious Neander says, 'in other passages of the same letter we rather meet with the free spirit of the original presbyterian

constitution of the church.'[1] Again, under the section 'upon the alterations in the constitution of the church after the time of the apostles,' Neander gives the following account: 'The alterations which were introduced into the constitution of the church, in this period, refer principally to the following heads: 1st, The distinction between the bishop and the presbyter; and the development of the monarchico-episcopal form of government. 2d, The distinction between the spirituals and the laity, and the forming of a priestly caste, in opposition to the evangelical idea of a christian priesthood. And, 3d, The increase of the number of ecclesiastical offices. In regard to the first, we have no certain and complete records of the manner in which the alterations occurred in particular instances; but, from the analogy of the case, we find very little difficulty in arriving at very clear conclusions. It was but natural, that as the presbyters, originally equal, formed a consulting council, it should speedily happen, that one of their number should obtain the presidency. This might be so arranged, that, according to a certain rule, the presidency should be occupied by each of the members in rotation. It is possible, that at the very beginning such an arrangement may have existed in many places, yet we do not find the slightest historical trace of it; and, not only so, but on the other hand, we do not meet with any trace to prove, that originally the office of the president of the college of presbyters was distinguished by any particular name. But, from what we find in the second century, we must conclude, that soon after the apostolic times the standing office of a president of the presbyters must have been formed, and that this president, in so far as (during his presidentship) he bore the principal *oversight* over the rest, obtained the name of a bishop, and thus came to be distinguished from the other presbyters. This name was thus, at last, given exclusively to the president; originally they all bore it in common, for the bishop, who thus acted as president, had, certainly, no other official distinction than simply *primus inter pares*.[2]

Mosheim, in his Commentaries, as well as in his History, gives the same testimony.[3] 'That the first churches had no bishops, may, I think, very clearly be proved from the writings of the New Testament.'[4] 'Whilst the christian assem-

1) Hist. of the Christ. Rel. vol. i. p. 199.

2) Ibid, p. 193. See also his Hist. of the first Plant. of the Ch. vol. i. pp. 41, 167, &c.

3) Comment. on the Affairs of the Ch. before Constantine, vol. i. pp. 224–226, &c. Instit. of Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 85. Am. ed.

4) P. 226, note.

blies or churches were but small, two, three, or four presbyters were found amply sufficient to labor for the welfare, and regulate the concerns, of each; and over a few men like these, inflamed as they were with the sincerest piety towards God, and receiving but very moderate stipends, it was not required, that any one should be appointed to preside in the capacity of a ruler or superintendent. But, as the congregations of christians became every day larger and larger, a proportionate gradual increase in the number of the presbyters and ministers of necessity took place; and as the rights and power of all were the same, it was soon found impossible, under the circumstances of that age, when every church was left to the care of itself, for any thing like general harmony to be maintained amongst them, or for the various necessities of the multitude, to be regularly and satisfactorily provided for, without some one to preside, and exert a controlling influence. Such being the case, the churches adopted the practice of selecting, and placing at the head of the council of presbyters, some one man of eminent wisdom and prudence, whose peculiar duty it should be to allot to his colleagues their several tasks, and by his advice, and every other mode of assistance, to prevent, as far as in him lay, the interests of the assembly, over which he was thus appointed to preside, from experiencing any kind of detriment or injury.'

Gieseler, also, in his very elaborate history, takes the same ground.[1] 'The new churches every where formed themselves on the model of the mother church, at Jerusalem. At the head of each were the *elders*, (πρεσβυτεροι επισκοποι,) all officially of equal rank, though in several instances a peculiar authority seems to have been conceded to some one individual, from personal considerations. Under the superintendence of the elders were the deacons and deaconesses. (Rom. 16: 1; 1 Tim. 5: 9, 10.) All these received their support, like the poor, from the free contributions of the church, (1 Tim. 5: 17; 1 Cor. 9: 13.)' 'The apostles had the general superintendence of all the churches, and were *co-presbyters* in each particular church, (συμπρεσβυτεροι, 1 Pet. 5: 1.)'

Spanheim, in his Ecclesiastical Annals, of which Mr. Wright, the episcopal translator, says, that it 'has raised him to the very first rank among historians of the church, and will continue to be a monument *aere perennius*,'[2] under century first, affirms, 'bishops[3] (episcopi, overseers) were ordained

1) Text Book of Eccl. Hist. vol. i. pp. 56 – 58.

2) Eccl. Ann. Transl. Pref. p. 12. Lond. 1840.

3) Ibid, p. 154.

over every church, and so called from their duty to oversee sacred affairs, called also presbyters or elders, from their age and gravity; shepherds, from their office of feeding the flock; teachers and ministers of the word, from their office of teaching; and chiefs and rulers, from their prerogative of governing.'

Du Pin allows no distinction between bishops and presbyters in the first century. He supposes a distinction to have arisen in the second century, under Ignatius. Even then, however, he only pleads for 'some distinction;' so far as to imply, that the bishops 'presided over the church and presbyters.'[1]

Milman, in his recent History of Christianity, while he advocates the episcopal form of the early church, yet candidly acknowledges the extreme difficulty of deciding the matter. The primitive constitution of these churches is a subject which it is impossible to decline; though few points in christian history rest on more dubious and imperfect, in general on inferential evidence, yet few have been contested with greater pertinacity. The whole of christianity, when it *emerges out of the obscurity* (that is, the evident presbyterian parity) of the first century, appears uniformly governed by certain superiors of each community called bishops. But the origin and extent of this superiority, and the manner in which the bishop assumes a distinct authority from the inferior presbyters, is among those difficult questions of christian history which, since the reformation, has been more and more darkened, by those fatal enemies to candid and dispassionate inquiry, prejudice, and interest. The earliest Christian communities appear to have been ruled and represented, in the absence of the apostle, who was their first founder, *by their* elders, who *are likewise called bishops*, or overseers of the churches. These PRESBYTER BISHOPS and deacons are the only two orders which we discover at first in the church of Ephesus, at Philippi, and *perhaps in Crete*. On the other hand, at a very early period, one religious functionary, superior to the rest, appears to have been almost universally recognised; at least, it is difficult to understand how, in so short a time, among communities, though not entirely disconnected, yet scattered over the whole Roman world, a scheme of government popular, or rather aristocratical, should become, even in form, monarchical.'[2]

1) Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 42.

2) The Hist. of Christ. vol. ii. pp. 63, 64. Eng. ed. B. ii. ch. iv.

'All presbyters,' says the Rev. Mr. Riddle,[1] 'as left in the churches by the apostles, were equal: but soon after the apostles' times, precedence and authority were granted to certain presbyters, in the several churches, as an expedient for good order.' So also, in another place, he says,[2] 'in the earliest times, when no formal distinction between *επισκοποι* and *πρεσβυτεροι* had taken place, the presbyters, especially the *προεστωτες*, (1 Tim. 5: 17,) discharged those episcopal functions, which afterwards, when a careful distinction of ecclesiastical officers had been made, they were not permitted to discharge, otherwise than as substitutes or vicars of a bishop.'[3]

The able author of Letters on the Fathers, who is a member of the church of England, thus speaks.[4] 'As to bishops, distinct from presbyters, we have no evidence, except that of *Ignatius*, for the two first centuries. Clement and Polycarp most clearly recognise but two orders. Barnabas and Hermas having nothing very distinct on the subject. *Justin* mentions only two officers in the church in his time, whom he calls president, (*προεστως*,) and deacon. (*διακονος*.) *Irenæus* uses the terms bishop and presbyter indiscriminately. Thus we see the weight of evidence during the two first centuries, is against the three orders, which may naturally create a suspicion, that those passages in Ignatius, which refer to them, are interpolations; for he stands alone in what he states, for the first two centuries, and not only alone but opposed by the strongest authorities during that period.'

Dr. Hawkins, in his recent discourse, says,[5] 'There is no limit, indeed, to the universal reception of the orders of presbyter and deacon; it is coeval with the first planting of the churches of Christ; and, if we cannot assert, as I think we cannot, that, at the close of the first century, every considerable church had its bishop, as well as its presbyters and deacons, still there is, at least, abundant evidence, that it was the general practice.'

These testimonies are very strongly confirmed by the Peshito Syriac version of the New Testament, made according to bishop Walton, Carpzov, Leusden, bishop Lowth, Dr. Kennicott, and Michaelis, in the first century, or in the earlier part of the second century,[6] uniformly renders, the *πρεσβυτερους*, as it occurs in Acts, 20: 17, 28; in Peter, 5: 1, 2, 'elder;' and

1) Christian Antiquities, p. 186.
2) Ibid, p. 233.
3) See also his Eccl. Chronology, p. 10.
4) P. 67.
5) On the Apostolical Succession. Lond. 1842. p. 5. See also his Bampton Lect. p. 174.
6) Horne's Introd. vol. ii. p. 221, who thinks this 'the most probable opinion.'

the word επισκοπης, in 1 Tim. 3: 1, &c., the 'office of an elder.' On this fact, the learned John David Michaelis, in 'Introduction to the New Testament,' thus remarks, 'We know that the distinction between bishops and elders was introduced into the Christian church in a very early age; yet the distinction was unknown to the Syrian translator.' In reference to this statement, Dr. Herbert Marsh, afterwards bishop of Peterborough, and a zealous high churchman, in his 'Notes' on Michealis's work, makes the following observation: 'This proves, that the Syriac translator understood his original; and that he made a proper distinction between the language of the *primitive* and the *hierarchal* church.'

This testimony, from the Syriac version, is remarkably confirmed by existing facts. Speaking of the Nestorians, Dr. Grant says,[1] 'Their form of church government is essentially episcopal; but, with a single exception in the Jelu tribe, there is not a bishop among the independent Nestorians, where their religious forms have been preserved, the most exempt from any foreign influence. It was a singular fact, to which my attention was first called by the testimony of Dr. Buchanan, that there is not a word in the Syriac language, expressive of the office of bishop. The Nestorians, in common with the other Syrians, have borrowed the Greek term, *episcopos*. This is the more remarkable, considering the fact, that the Syriac language was extensively used in Palestine, in the days of our Saviour, and was spoken by our Lord himself; and considering, also, the very early date of the Syriac version of the scriptures, as early as the beginning of the second century. In every case where the term bishop occurs in our version, in theirs it is rendered presbyter or priest. I make these statements with the single remark, that, while this form of church government may be the best for the Nestorians, in their circumstances, there is enough in the facts I have mentioned, to caution us about too hasty an inference concerning the apostolic origin of episcopacy, on the ground, that it exists in a church, which was founded by the apostles.'

Thus, it appears, that the earliest writers, the best evidence that can be given, and the first links on which the whole chain must be suspended, are all against prelacy, and in favor of presbytery.

1) The Nestorians the Lost Tribes, pp. 105, 106. See Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii. pp. 32, 553.

# CHAPTER III.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS, IN FAVOR OF THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERS TO THE TRUE MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION.

## § 1. *The testimony of Papias, and Justin Martyr.*

Of the primitive fathers, the first of whom we have any record is Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia, A. D. 116. Of his exposition of the oracles of God only a few fragments remain. And of these, the only passage bearing on the question before us, is perhaps the one preserved by Eusebius,[1] and which is as follows: 'I shall not think it grievous to set down in writing, with my interpretations, the things which I have learned of the presbyters, and remember as yet very well, being fully certified of their truth. If I met any where with one who had conversed with the presbyters, I inquired after the sayings of the presbyters; what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas, or James had said; what John, or Matthew, or any other disciples of the Lord were wont to say; and what Ariston, or John the presbyter, said: for I am of the mind that I could not profit so much by reading books, as by attending to those who spake with the living voice.' It is very evident from this extract, that, in the estimation of this primitive father, the presbyterate was the highest order in the ministry, and the true succession of the apostles, in their ordinary ministry, since he speaks only of presbyters, and expressly calls the apostles themselves, presbyters.[2]

Of Justin Martyr, who lived A. D. 140,[3] we have numerous and very celebrated writings. That which relates to this

1) Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 39.

2) Ibid, lib. iii. c. 29. See in Dr. Miller, on the Min. p. 97. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 13–15.

3) I adopt the arrangement o Clarke, in his Succ. of Sacred Literat. vol. i. p. 95.

subject, will be found contained in his Apology, from chapter eighty-five to eighty-eight. The moderator of the christian assembly, he denominates προεστως, *pro-estos*, or president, by whom, as is allowed, we are to understand, bishop. In these chapters, says Mr. Powell,[1] this term, and this only, as designating the minister, occurs six times; neither the term bishop nor presbyter is used at all. The word simply means a president. Reeves, the translator of Justin, a churchman, and who loses no opportunity of opposing sectarians, allows, in his notes on the passage, that the προεστως of Justin, the *probati seniores* of Tertullian, the *majores natu*, in Cyprian's works, (Ep. seventy-five,) and the προεστωτες πρεσβυτεροι, or presiding presbyters, of St. Paul, (1 Tim. 4: 17,) were all one and the same. Now Tertullian, Cyprian, (or rather Firmilian, the celebrated bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia,) and St. Paul, all mean presbyters. Their language cannot be otherwise interpreted without violence. 'Presbyter,' says bishop Jewel, 'is expounded in latin, by *natu major*.'

According to Justin Martyr, therefore, the bishop, who was the pastor of a single congregation, and therefore, by no possibility, a prelate, was also a presbyter. As such he offered up prayers, and gave thanks, in the church; administered the Lord's supper; delivered discourses; and generally conducted the worship of the congregation; in all which duties we have described to us the office of a pastor, but not that of a prelate. Justin, it will be observed, employs the very term, so commonly applied to presbyters throughout the New Testament, and calls his bishop the προεστως,[2] the presbyter who presided, the moderator or, *primus inter pares*. This is admitted by Dr. Heylin himself, who, like Balaam blessing Israel, when he would fain have cursed them, establishes a presbyterian parity of pastors, while he is most desirous to destroy it, by making the bishop, in Justin Martyr's time, all one with the ordinary preacher of God's word, and celebrator of the eucharist.'[3] Neither is there any colorable pretext for the supposition that the bread, of whose distribution, he informs us, was sent by the deacons to other congregations, and not to the absent members. This evasion, only shows that any improbabilities will be cheerfully adopted, rather than yield to the force of evidence, when it is subversive of prelatic claims.[4]

1) Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 52, 53.
2) See our Lect. on.
3) Hist. of Episcop. part ii. p. 39.
4) On this objection, see Boyse's Anct. Episcop. pp. 115, 116. Jameson's Fund. of the Hier. p. 224.

In reading Justin's description of divine worship, we might well imagine he was describing the services of a presbyterian assembly.[1] On the whole, therefore, we may conclude, with Dr. Wilson,[2] that 'having now passed the middle of the second century, and found one kind only of elders, and these the only ministers of the word, we may infer that *such is the fair construction of the New Testament*, on the ordinary officers of the church. The innovations which we are soon to witness in their gradual progress, were unauthorized, and, consequently, *mere nullities*. Though every denomination has on some point, erred, and the original names of the officers have been often changed, the providence of God has, in every age, preserved the two orders, and a legitimate administration.'

## § 2. *The testimony of Irenæus.*

The next writer, from whom we are able to produce any thing bearing upon this controversy, is Irenæus, who was bishop of Lyons, in France, A. D. 178, and the scholar and admirer of Polycarp.[3] After Irenæus, according to Blondel, had been bishop for nine years, as successor to Pothinus, he is expressly denominated the presbyter of that church, in the letter addressed by the martyrs to Eleutherius, bishop of Rome.[4] They here inform Eleutherius, that 'if righteousness could give a due place and rank, they should commend to him Irenæus among the first, as a presbyter of the church, which degree he had obtained.'[5] Bishop Stillingfleet[6] justly observes, that Blondel's argument does not lie here, that because they call him the presbyter of the church, therefore, he was no bishop; but he freely acknowledges him to have succeeded Pothinus there in his bishopric. But, because, after the difference arose elsewhere, between bishops and presbyters, *yet* they called him by the name of presbyter, it seems very improbable, that when they were commending one to the bishop of another church, they should make use of the lowest name of honor then appropriated to subject-presbyters, which, instead of commending, were a great debasing

1) Apol. i. pp. 95–97.

2) Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 24. See on the testimony of Justin Martyr, Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 101, 102. Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 52, 53. King's Prim. Christ. part ii. ch. i. Plea for Presbytery, p. 260. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 16–20. Pierce's Vind. of Dissent. part iii. ch. i. pp. 68–72.

3) Wake's Apost. Fathers, p. 149. Eng. ed.

4) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. v. c. 4. Stillingfleet Iren. pp. 311, 312. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 27.

5) Euseb. Hist. l. v. c. 4.

6) Iren. pp. 311, 312.

of him, if they had looked on a superior order above those presbyters, as of divine institution, and thought there had been so great a distance between a bishop and subject-presbyter, as we are made to believe there was. Which is, as if the master of a college, in one university, should be sent by the fellows of the society to the heads of the other, and should, in his commendatory letters to them, be styled a senior fellow of that house. This was the case of Irenæus; he is supposed to be bishop of Lyons; he is sent by the church of Lyons, on a message to the bishop of Rome; when, notwithstanding his being bishop, they call him presbyter of that church, when there were other presbyters, who were not bishops. What could any one imagine by the reading of it, but that the bishop was nothing else but the senior-presbyter, or one that had a primacy of order among them, but no divine right to a power of jurisdiction, over his fellow presbyters.

In order that the important testimony of this writer may be justly weighed, we will bring together what bears upon this matter. Speaking of some heretics, he says,[1] 'when, again, we challenge them by appealing to that tradition, which is from the apostles, which is preserved in the churches by the successions of presbyters; they oppose tradition, and say that they, being wiser not only than the presbyters, but than the apostles, have found out the uncorrupted truth, &c. All, therefore, who would see the truth,[2] may observe in every church the tradition of the apostles manifested in all the world; and we can reckon up those who were appointed bishops in the churches by the apostles, and who were their successors to our time, who neither taught nor knew any such thing as these men dream of. For had the apostles known any hidden mysteries, which they had a mind to deliver to such as were perfect, privately, and apart from the rest, they would have chiefly delivered them to those to whom they committed the churches themselves. For they would have them to be very perfect and unblamable in all things, whom they left as successors, delivering to them their own place, of being teachers, (or, as some render it, their own place of authority.) But, because it is long in such a volume as this, to reckon up the succession of all churches; by pointing out the tradition and declared faith of that greatest, and most ancient and noted church, founded at Rome, by two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, which she has from the

1) Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 2. 2) Ibid, lib. iii. c. 3.

apostles, and is come to us by the succession of bishops, we confound all those,' &c. And then he mentions the succession of Linus, Anacletus, Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Elentherius; and afterwards Polycarp, bishop of the church of Smyrna.

'We ought,' he again[1] says, 'to obey those *presbyters* who are in the church; those, I mean, *who have succession from the apostles*, as we have shown, who, with the succession of THE EPISCOPATE, have received, according to the good pleasure of the Father, the sure gift of truth. . . . But they who are looked upon by many as *presbyters*, but serve their own pleasures, . . . . and are elated with pride, at *their exaltation to the chief seat*, . . shall be reproved by the Word. . . . From all such it behoves us to stand aloof, and to cleave to those who, *as I have said before*, both retain the doctrine of the apostles, and, with THE ORDER OF THE PRESBYTERSHIP, (or as Fevardentius reads, *of a presbyter*,) exhibit soundness in word, and a blameless conversation.' Having described wicked presbyters, he adds,[2] 'from such we ought to depart, but to adhere to those who keep the doctrine of the apostles, and with the order of presbytery, maintain sound doctrine, and a blameless conversation, &c. Such presbyters, the church does nourish, concerning whom the prophet also saith, I will give thee princes in peace, and bishops in righteousness. Of whom our Lord also said, who, therefore, is that faithful, and good and wise servant, whom his master may set over his house, to give them their food in due season?' Again, 'he, that is, the apostle, attributes to all teachers, that succession of the church that is from the apostles; and then relates what doctrine he had received from a certain presbyter, that had received it from such as saw and conversed with the apostles.' Writing to Florinus, he says, 'these opinions, O Florinus, the presbyters before our times, the disciples, (or first successors,) of the apostles, did by no means deliver to thee.'[3] After alluding to Polycarp, and to his instructions and discourses, he adds, 'I can testify before God, that if that holy and apostolic presbyter, (Polycarp,) had heard only such a thing, he would instantly have reclaimed and stopt his ears.' Writing to Victor, then bishop of Rome, on the subject of the Easter controversy, he reminds him, that 'he ought to follow the ancient custom of the presbyters, whom he had succeeded,' alluding to Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus,

1) Adv. Hæres. l. iv. c. 43.
2) Ibid, l. iv. c. 44.
3) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. v. c. 39.

and Xystus, whom he had just named, and whom he calls presbyters, though now named popes.[1]

Now, upon the review of these passages of Irenæus, we may plainly see, that he never thought bishops a distinct order from presbyters. That christian doctrine, which, in some passages, he supposes handed down to his age, by the succession of bishops, in others, he asserts to be transmitted by the succession of presbyters. Nay, he ascribes the succession of episcopacy to the presbyters: he applies to presbyters that passage of the prophet, wherein he speaks of God's giving them princes in peace, and bishops in righteousness. And having distinguished between apostles, and prophets, and teachers, he ascribes this succession from the apostles to teachers, who were, as we have seen, presbyters.[2] 'What strange confusion,' says Stillingfleet,[3] 'must this raise in any one's mind, that seeks for a succession of episcopal power above presbyters from the apostles, by the testimony of Irenæus, when he so plainly attributes both the succession to presbyters, and the episcopacy too, which he speaks of? Did Irenæus think that bishops, in a superior order to presbyters, were derived by an immediate succession from the apostles, and yet call the presbyters by the name of bishops?'

To evade the irresistible force of these testimonies, what are the artifices of our opponents? Two very desperate shifts.[4] The one is, that when Irenæus speaks of the succession of presbyters, he means *old men*, and not officers of the church at all, and thus, rather than have presbyters to be the successors of the apostles, we are to have the new order erected of *old men*. The other is, that Irenæus distinguishes between two kinds of presbyters, some of whom were, and others were not, the successors of the apostles. So that prelatists are willing to give us any possible number of orders, if thereby they can throw obstacles in the way of a conclusion. But this imagination is founded on the ignorance of our views. We do not deny,[5] 'but that there was, in Irenæus's time, a primacy of order, among these presbyters or bishops, that one of them had the first rank and place, among his colleagues of the same order and office. And that is a sufficient reason for his only mentioning single persons, when he reckons up the succession of the bishops of Rome. But the reckoning the succession by such single persons, will never, as we have seen, prove

1) Ibid, l. v. c. 24, and Riddle's Chr. Antiq. p. 230, Note.
2) Boyse's Anct. Episcop. p 265.
3) Irenicum, pp. 307, 308.
4) See Boyse's Anct. Christ. p. 267, &c.
5) To use the reasoning of Boyse, in Anct. Christ. pp. 267, 268.

them to be of a different office and order from their colleagues. It seems, therefore, a just inference from this letter of the church of Lyons, compared with what has been cited from Irenæus, that in the Gallic churches,[1] in his time, the senior presbyter was not then distinguished from his colleagues by the name of bishop, but that both name and office were common to him with his colleagues. Both were alike, according to Irenæus, successors of the apostles.[2] Mr. Thorndike is obliged to make this admission. 'Irenæus,' he says,[3] 'that is wont to appeal to the succession of bishops, to evidence that which the church then believed to have come from the apostles, here referreth himself to the presbyters, for the same purpose, affirming, that they succeeded the apostles, without doubt, calling the bishops by the name of 'presbyters,' in regard of the office common to both. Thus are both ranks comprised, in one name of προεστωτες, in the first canon of the council of Antiochia.'[4]

## § 5. *The testimony of Victor, bishop of Rome, Clement Alexandrinus, and Tertullian.*

Victor, bishop of Rome, A. D. 192, thus writes:[5] 'As thy holy fraternity were taught by those presbyters, who had seen the apostles in the flesh, and governed the church until thy time, (we find) the catholic church celebrate pasch, not on the fourteenth of the moon, with the Jews, but from the fifteenth day to the twenty-first. Therefore, let thy fraternity write to the presbyters of Gaul, that they observe pasch, not as the Jews, who deny Christ, but with the followers of the apostles, and preachers of the truth. The college of the brethren salute thee; salute the brethren who are with thee in the Lord. Eubulus, one of our college, who carries this epistle to Vienna, is ready to live and die with thee.' This epistle was sent, by Victor and his colleagues, to Dionysius, bishop of Vienna; and from this passage, it is evident, to a demonstration, that presbyters were the successors of the apostles,

1) See above.

2) See Pearson in art. Bishop, in Rees's Cyclop.

3) Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 77, 78.

4) On the testimony of Irenæus, see fully given in Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 98–100, 325; Bib. Report, 1830, p. 53; Powell on Ap. Succ. p. 53; Presb. Def. p. 127; Schism. p. 139; Blair's Waldenses, vol. i. pp. 28, 29, 34, 35, 142; Div. Right of the Ministry, part ii. pp. 115–117; Corbet's Remains, p. 113; Plea for Presbytery, p. 258, &c.; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 29, 35; in Natali. Alexandr. Eccl. Dissert. pp. 69, 71.

5) Epis. ad Dion. in Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. p. 559.

the constant rulers of the church, from them to the days of Victor, who lived in the close of the second century.

Clement Alexandrinus, who lived A. D. 194, was a presbyter in the church at Alexandria, and president of the theological seminary in that city, where he had the celebrated Origen as one of his pupils. In his remaining work, he twice enumerates the officers of the church, under the names, bishops, presbyters, and deacons; but this, as we have already shown, is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of presbyterians, who use these very terms for the same purpose. That he identifies bishops and presbyters, as the same general ministerial order, would appear to be incontrovertible. In the very paragraph in which he once makes the above enumeration,[1] and in allusion to the same heavenly progression, he repeats the order, under the two denominations of presbyters and deacons,[2] while in the other, he places presbyters first, and bishops second, and widows fourth.[3] Though only a presbyter, he yet styles himself, a governor of the church.[4] He ranks himself among the shepherds, or pastors.[5] He speaks of presbyters imposing hands, and giving their blessing.[6] Presbyters, according to Clement, were intrusted with a dignified ministry. He expressly identifies bishop and presbyter, by using the one term for the other, in the passage in 1 Tim. 5: 14.[7] Presbyters, according to him, occupy the chief seat on earth, and shall sit down among the four and twenty thrones in heaven.[8] He repeatedly enumerates only presbyters and deacons, as the ministering officers of the church. The presbyter, with Clement Alexandrinus, was the highest order of the ministry, and occupied the chief seat, being clothed with the chief dignity in the church, and was, therefore, the true and proper successor of the apostles.[9]

Tertullian, who lived A. D. 200, and died A. D. 220, is the next writer, whose testimony is produced on this question. To a candid inquirer into the opinions of this father, in regard to the ministerial function, it must appear evident, that they were very loose and indeterminate. This is the opinion of

1) Stromat. lib. vi. see in Dr. Miller on Min. p. 104.
2) Such is the opinion of King, in his Prim. Church, p. 72.
3) Pædagog. lib. iii.
4) Pædagog. lib. i.
5) Ibid, lib. iii.
6) Stromat. lib. iii.
7) Ibid, lib. vi.
8) Ibid, lib. i. iii. vi.
9) See on this testimony of Clement Alexandrinus, Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 103–106; Anderson's Def. of Presb. p. 184; King's Prim. Ch. p. 72; Plea for Presbytery, p. 260; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. pp. 36–40; Pierce's Vind. of Dissent, part iii. ch. i. p. 73, &c.; Boyse's Anct. Christ. pp. 122–125; Blondel, in Natali. Alexandr. p. 73.

bishop Kaye, in his learned work on the writings of this father.[1] 'But how clearly soever the distinction between the bishops and the other orders of clergy may be asserted in the writings of Tertullian, they afford us little assistance in ascertaining wherein this distinction consisted.' Such, also, are the views of the episcopalian church historian, Waddington,[2] and of archbishop Potter.[3]

In his most celebrated work,[4] his Apology, whilst describing the order and government of the church, he says, 'PRÆSIDENT PROBATI QUIQUE SENIORES, &c. Approved elders, or PRESBYTERS, PRESIDE amongst us; having received that *honor*, not by money, but BY THE SUFFRAGES of their BRETHREN,' cap. 39,[5] Reeves, who was, as has been remarked, a rigid churchman, in his note on the place, says, 'The presiding elders here are undoubtedly the same with the προεστως in Justin Martyr.' Here the *presbyters preside*. One, as *primus presbyter*, as the highest priest or highest *presbyter*, presided over the rest, and, for distinction's sake, was called *bishop*. So in another very noted passage in his work against *heretics*, he speaks of the apostolical churches, 'over which the apostolical chairs still presided.' The order was usual, in the meetings of ministers in the primitive church, for the ministers' chairs to be set in a semicircle. The middle chair was raised a little above the rest. The highest presbyter, or priest, sat in this, and the other presbyters, or priests, sat round him. The deacons were never allowed chairs: they always stood. Now these were the chairs Tertullian means. The presbyters sat in them, and thus, in council, *presided over the church in common*. So says Jerome, 'the church was *governed* by the *common council of the presbyters*.' Here, then, PRESBYTERS are *apostolical* SUCCESSORS, SIT in APOSTOLICAL CHAIRS, and are the SAME ORDER with *bishops*.' Again, Tertullian tells us,[5] 'that they received the sacrament of the eucharist from the hands of none but such as presided in their assemblies.' Again, he says,[6] 'that before they went to the water, to be baptized, they first, in the church, under the hand of the president, (or ruler of the church,) professed their renouncing the devil, &c.' And further, that the christians, in his time, received the sacrament

1) The Eccl. Hist. of the 2d and 3d Cent. illustrat. from Tertull. Camb. 1829, p. 234.

2) Waddington's Hist. p. 35, in Schism. p. 143.

3) Potter on Ch. Govt. p. 154; Differentiam inter ordinem et Plebem Constituit, ecclesia uac toritas; lib. de Exhort. Castit. cap. 7.

4) Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 58, 59.

5) De Corona. c. 3. opp. 102.

6) Ibid.

thrice every week.[1] 'Now from these passages[2] of Tertullian,' says Mr. Boyse, 'we may justly thus argue. Either there was, in Tertullian's time, no distinction between bishops and presbyters, or there was. If there was not, this point of primitive antiquity must be wholly given up; if there was, either Tertullian, by these *probati seniores*, approved elders, these presidentes and antistites, that had the presidency and chief rule in their religious assemblies, intends bishops or presbyters, or both. If presbyters only, then where shall we find any such thing in Tertullian as a bishop, as distinct from presbyters at all? And if these were presbyters, prelatists must drop one of their distinguishing characters of episcopal power, namely, excommunication, since, in passing that solemn sentence, Tertullian tells us, these approved elders did preside. Nay, if we suppose that Tertullian, by presidents, includes both bishops and presbyters, it will still follow that he makes the power of inflicting church censures common to both, and supposes both to be of the same order or office, though the bishop might have the like superiority as a rector among his curates. On the other hand, if Tertullian mean bishops, as distinguished from presbyters, (as I shall freely own he does, in several other places, suppose there was *some* distinction between them,) then, it is evident, they could be no more than parochial bishops. Now we have such bishops, and it is ridiculous to reproach us for rejecting primitive episcopacy, or to allege this primitive parochial episcopacy, for the defence of the divine right of that diocesan episcopacy that is destructive of it, and particularly deprives these primitive bishops of the power of excommunication that then belonged to them.

It must be admitted that Tertullian utterly rejected the claim of divine right, which is essential to the prelatic argument. Thus he speaks,[3] 'The highest priest, who is the bishop, has the right of administering baptism. Then the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the authority of the bishops, *because* of the *honor* of the *church*. THIS BEING PRESERVED, *peace is preserved*. OTHERWISE the RIGHT belongs even to *laymen*. However, the laity ought especially to submit, humbly and modestly, to the discipline or ecclesiastical regulations of the church in these matters, and not assume the office of the bishop, seeing their superiors, the presbyters and deacons, submit to the same. Let it suffice

1) De Oratione, c. 14. op. pp. 135, 136.

2) To use the argument of Mr. Boyse, Anct. Christ. p. 118.

3) De Baptismo, cap. 17, in Wks. p. 225. Ed. Parnel.

that you use *your* LIBERTY in cases of necessity, when the condition of the person, or the circumstances of time or place, compel you to it.' De Baptismo, c. 17. Again, he says,[1] 'We shall be foolish if we suppose that what is not lawful to priests is lawful to laymen. Are not those of us who are laics, priests? It is written, 'He hath made us kings and priests to God and his father.' The authority of the church has appointed the difference between the order and the people, and the dignity is sacred, where there is an assembly of the order, so, *where there is no assembly of the ecclesiastical order, you both offer* (that is, in the eucharist,) *and baptize, and are alone a priest to yourself.* Moreover, where there are three, there is a church, *although they be laymen.* For each one lives by his own faith, nor is there respect of persons with God, since not the hearers of the law, but the doers are justified by God, as the apostle says. Therefore, if you *have in yourself the rights of a priest, where necessity requires it,* it is right that you should also conform to the discipline befitting a priest, where it may be necessary to have the rights of a priest.' 'Now, whatever may be thought of this passage,' says the Rev. Mr. Goode,[2] 'in other respects, one thing is clear, that Tertullian had no notion that consecration, by a bishop or presbyter, was *essential* to the participation of the eucharist, but distinctly held that, in their absence, it was quite competent to a layman to celebrate it, which shows that he regarded it merely as a matter of *ecclesiastical order.*' St. Jerome also admits Tertullian's maxim, that what a man hath received he may impart, 'which,' says Dr. Pusey, 'would justify presbyterian ordination.'[3]

Moreover, while Tertullian appeals against the heretics to the succession of faithful ministers found in the orthodox churches, yet he is very far from placing this succession as prelates do in a personal succession of individual men. The true succession, according to Tertullian, is to be found mainly in true doctrine, the very last standard by which the claims of the prelatico-Romish succession could bear to be tested. Thus he affirms,[4] 'But if the heretics FEIGN OR FABRICATE SUCH A SUCCESSION, THIS WILL NOT HELP THEM. For their DOCTRINE itself, compared with the *doctrine* of the *apostles*, will, by its own diversity and contrariety, pronounce against them, that it had not as its author any apostle or apostolical man; for as

1) De Exhort. castit. c. 7; De Padicit, c. 21; See Goode's Div. Rule, vol. ii. pp. 52, 53.

2) Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 52, 53.

3) Library of the Fathers, vol. x.; Tertullian's Wks. p. xvi. preface.

4) De Præscript. c. 32 and 33, in Wks. p. 210.

there was no difference among the apostles in their doctrine, so neither did any apostolical men teach any thing contrary to them, except those who DIVIDED FROM THE APOSTLES, and PREACHED DIFFERENTLY. To THIS FORM of trial will appeal be made by those churches HENCEFORWARD daily established, which, though they have neither *any* of the *apostles*, nor *any apostolical men*, for their *founders*, yet ALL *agreeing in the* SAME FAITH, are, from this CONSANGUINITY OF DOCTRINE, to be esteemed NOT LESS APOSTOLICAL than the former.'

Our conclusion, therefore, is, that, in the time of Tertullian, who stood, as Neander remarks, on the boundary between two different epochs in the development of the church, there was a growing elevation of the presiding elder, or presbyter-bishop, to which, however, a powerful opposition still existed.[1] It also appears that, even then, the bishop was but a presbyterian pastor, having a presidency over other pastors and officers, and the church generally; and that presbyters were therefore still regarded as the true successors of the apostles. And of this opinion was archbishop Usher.[2]

## § 4. *The testimony of Hippolytus, Origen, and Gregory Thaumaturgus.*

Hippolytus, probably of Arabia, flourished about A. D. 220. In reference to his writings, Dr. Wilson remarks,[3] 'The apostolic tradition, being indeed a modification from the eighth book of the apostolical constitutions, merits equal contempt, and carries its obvious grounds of condemnation on its face. Yet was it written when bishops were parochial, commissioned without imposition of hands, when a presbytery was in every church, when the presbyters *were all preachers*, and the deacons served.' The tract 'Against the Heresy of a certain Noetus,' the patripassion, contains much good sense, and has claims of genuineness. In the first paragraph Noetus is said to have affirmed, that Christ was the father, and that the father himself suffered; that Noetus was Moses; and his brother, Aaron; and that '*the presbyters*, having heard these things, and cited him, they examined him before the church.' He denied, but afterwards defended,

1) Neander's Hist. of Ch. Rel. vol. i. p. 199.

2) See his Reduction of Episcopacy to Presb. Govt. Lond. 1656; on the testimony of Tertullian, see Dr. Miller on Min. p. 111, &c.; Schism, p. 141; Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 56–58; Anderson's Defence, p. 184; Plea for Presbytery, p. 262; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 40–44; Jameson's Cyp. Isot. 433, 450; Baxter's Disput. 93–95.

3) Prim. Govt. pp. 63, 64.

openly, his opinions. 'The presbyters summoned him, a second time, condemned,' and 'cast him out of the church.' If this be a part of the writings of Hippolytus against heretics, mentioned by Eusebius, Jerome, and Photius, and quoted, without name, by Epiphanius, it accords with all antecedent evidence, and evinces, that the *presbytery* in a church, then, had the power of citing, trying, and excommunicating heretics.

Origen flourished about the year A. D. 230, and lived a presbyter. His views on the subject before us, as far as they can be known from his imperfect remains, are nearly similar to those of Tertullian. He speaks of one general order of the ministry, and of bishops, as distinguished from other presbyters, by their ecclesiastical dignity and power. He nowhere allows them to be a distinct order, having any inherent preëminence and authority. The custom of fixed presidents was, in his day, evidently progressing fast towards its consummation in the fixed order of prelates. The following are quotations from his writings, from which it may be clearly deduced, that bishops and presbyters were the same order, and, therefore, that presbyters are the ministerial successors of the apostles. He says the *presbyters preside* over the church too. Thus addressing his hearers, in Hom. 7, on Jeremiah, he says, 'We of the CLERICAL ORDER, who PRESIDE *over you*.' Now every one knows, that Origen was NEVER any thing more than a *presbyter*. Speaking, in another place, of the ambition of some persons to be great in the church, he says, 'They first desire to be deacons, but not such as the scripture describes, but such as devour widows' houses, and for pretence make long prayers, and, therefore, shall receive a heavier judgment. Such deacons, consequently, will go about to seize the HIGH *chairs* of presbyters, PRIMAS CATHEDRAS. Some, also, not content with that, attempt *more*, in order that they may be called *bishops*, that is, *rabbi:* but they ought to understand, that a *bishop* must be *blameless*, and have the rest of the qualities described there, (Titus, 1 : 6, &c.,) so that, though men should *not* give such a one the NAME of *bishop*, yet he *will* BE a *bishop before God*.'[1] This is the general style of Origen, on this subject, and the substance of what occurs in his works on the matter. It is clear enough, that Jerome has given us the sense of Origen, as well as of the rest of the ancients. He was perfectly acquainted with Origen's opinion, and translated many of his

1) Tract 24, in Matt. 23.

works. Bishops and presbyters, with Origen, were the *same order; they* RULED the church, *in common*, the PRESBYTERS PRESIDING, with the BISHOP, he having a *higher chair*, and being *distinguished* by the *name* of *bishop*.[1] We only add, that, speaking of the angels in the Apocalypse, he says, that 'certain ruling presbyters in the churches were called angels, by John, in the apocalypse.'[2]

Gregory Thaumaturgus was one of the pupils of Origen, and bishop of Neocæsarea. He was denominated Thaumaturgus, or the wonder-worker, from his supposed power of working miracles. His life is written by Gregory, bishop of Nyssa. He gives the following account, as it is translated by bishop Burnet,[3] of his introduction into the christian ministry.[4] 'Being much set on the study of philosophy, he was afraid of engaging in the pastoral charge, and, therefore, avoided all occasions in which he might have been laid hold on, and ordained; which, Phedimus, a neighboring bishop, observing, though Gregory was then distant three days' journey from him, he did, by prayer, dedicate him to the service of God, at Neocæsarea, where there were, then, but seventeen christians; to which the other submitted, and came and served there. Whether he received any new orders, is but dubiously and darkly expressed by that author.'

This account may be considered a commentary on the opinions of Gregory, and the custom of the age. It is a further and explicit proof of the fact, that nothing like the views attached by prelatists to the sacred orders, were then prevalent in the church. Gregory was made a bishop of a small parish, and while there were no more than seventeen christians 'in Neocæsarea and the whole neighborhood.'[5] He was also the sole pastor, and, therefore, of necessity, we must conclude, that the only distinctive importance then attached to the office of bishop, was when there were more ministers in the same church than one, and when one presided among them. At his death, Gregory said he had but seventeen christians in his charge when he was ordained. His episcopal authority could, therefore, have been neither over pres-

1) Powell on Apost. Succ.

2) On the testimony of Origen, see Powell on Ap. Succ. p. 60; Anderson's Def. pp. 185, 186; Dr. Wilson's Govt. of the Ch. pp. 65–68; Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. of Christ, p. 566; Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, pp. 396, 400, 407, 408, 410; Blondel, in Natali. Alexandr. p. 76.

3) Hist. of Rights of Princes, p. 9.

4) Oratio in Greg. Thaum; see also, Basil Mag. l. de Spir. Sanct. c. 19. Rom. Breviar. die 15, Novemb. Menolog. Græc. in Wks. of Greg Neoces. Paris, 1662.

5) Clarke's Success. of Sacred Lit. vol. i. p. 173.

byters, for his only subordinate was one deacon: nor diocesan, for he had the oversight of no more than seventeen people. This fact, which is in perfect accordance with the history of the church prior to this period, evinces, that there were but two orders, one to preach and rule, and the other to serve.[1]

### § 5. *The testimony of Cyprian, Firmilian, and Novatus.*

Cyprian, the martyr, bishop of Carthage, A. D. 248, is our next witness. We have carefully examined his writings, and we cannot come to any other conclusion than that, while, in his day, there was a perceptible increase in the power and assumptions of the bishops, they were, still, parochial presidents; they still regarded the presbyters as their coequals, in point of ministerial order, whilst the government of the church was still in the hands of the presbytery, in conjunction with the people.

That a change had taken place in the character of the church, and in its ecclesiastical system, in the age of Cyprian, every one must admit. This resulted, first, from the fact, that Cyprian and his compeers were wholly penetrated by the notion that the Jewish hierarchy was the model of the christian ministry and church.[2] Secondly, from the doctrine that the principle of unity was placed in the bishop alone, without whose authority nothing could be done in the church, and by which the bishop was substituted for Christ; and, thirdly, from the close connection of the bishops with one another, in their synodical assemblies, since by thus acting in concert, they were able to triumph over the opposition of the presbyters, who were obliged to carry on their struggles in separate and disjointed efforts.[3] The power and activity of Cyprian contributed much to promote this victory, and to establish those views, by which, as Dr. Nolan candidly acknowledges, 'a total revolution has been eventually effected in the ecclesiastical discipline.'[4]

That there existed, therefore, in Cyprian's age, a species of episcopacy, we do not deny, and that the claims and powers

1) Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 85; on the testimony of Gregory Thaumaturgus, see Anderson's Defence, p. 186; Clarke's Succ. of Sacred Lit. vol. i. p. 173; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 84; Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 93; Corbet's Remains, p. 103. There was but one church in Neocæsarea, in A. D. 376, as appears from the canons of the Synod which met then; (Can. 13;) see Clarkson's Prim. Episc. p. 90.

2) Neander's Hist. of the Chr. Rel. vol. i. pp. 197, 198.

3) Neander, as above, p. 195.

4) Cath. Char. of Christ. p. 138; see also, pp. 100–103, 132–134, 179, 180.

of bishops had considerably advanced beyond those of the previous age we also admit. But, after all, the episcopacy of the Cyprianic age can no more be called the prelacy of modern times, than an infant can be called a man. It was parochial episcopacy, abused to the undue exaltation of the presiding officer. This we will show by proving that the church over which bishops then presided, was not a diocese, but a congregation; and, secondly, that the bishop was not distinguished from the other presbyters, by any exclusive assumption of order or power.

And first, the Cyprianic church was not a diocese, made up of several distinct churches, with their several altars or communion tables, as are the churches in any modern diocese, but was one congregation, however numerous. The church at Carthage was a particular one. There was but one in the city, although its members held assemblies, for religious exercises, at different places. But independent, stated churches, with officers and discipline of their own, and members peculiarly attached to them, there were none. This may be inferred from the fact, that, in all his writings, Cyprian never once alludes to any more than one church, although he would have been necessarily led to do so by his subject, had any such existed. We have nearly one hundred epistles of this father, many of them written to his church, during his absence, and when dissensions and troubles had arisen among his presbyters, and yet he never hints that there was any church but one in the city.[1] This appears also from the positive testimony of Cyprian. Thus having, during his absence, ordained one of the readers of his church, in writing to his presbyters, deacons, and people, he says,[2] 'What was more fit than that he should be set on the pulpit, that is, the tribunal of the church, that, by the height of the place, he might be seen by the whole flock, and read unto them the precepts and the gospel of the Lord, which he had so courageously and faithfully followed, that that voice of his that had confessed the Lord, might be daily heard in reciting what the Lord had spoken (in his word.) And then he adds, that he had thoughts also of advancing him to be one of the presbyters. And the same is observable in the ordination of Aurelius, another reader, who is supposed by Cyprian to read to the fraternity, and to be reader to the same flock to whom he was bishop.

'Now, had there,' says Mr. Boyse,[3] 'been several congre-

1) See Ep. 43, and Boyse, pp. 153 - 158.

2) Ep. 39.

3) Anct. Episcop. p. 159.

gations under Cyprian's charge, as their bishop, how comes he to give no intimation in which of them Aurelius and Celerinus were to officiate as readers? Nay, how comes he to suppose only one pulpit for his church, and that Celerinus's person might be seen and his voice heard of the whole flock?'

This will be further manifest from the fact, that the whole church at Carthage were accustomed, ordinarily, to join together, in the celebration of the Lord's supper. Cyprian 'celebrated the sacrament in presence of all the brotherhood.'[1] Further, the whole church at Carthage were ordinarily present in all acts of discipline, and in the transaction of other church affairs, and gave their judgment.[2] And, finally, as Cyprian was himself chosen to his office by the suffrages of his people, so does he declare that it was the general custom for the people to meet and choose their own bishop.[3] That church, therefore, over which Cyprian and his contemporary bishops presided, was such as could meet together in one place for all the acts of worship and discipline, and for the celebration of the ordinances, and was not therefore diocesan but parochial. Indeed it was a maxim with Cyprian, that there was 'one bishop to each particular church.'[4] He also styles himself 'pastor of the church.'[5]

*Secondly*, the Cyprianic bishop is not distinguished from the other presbyters by any higher order, or by any exclusive authority and prerogatives. He allows him indeed a primacy of *office* as president, but not of *order*, as prelates claim. Cyprian nowhere recognises the existence of an order of bishops having the *sole* power of ordination, government, and discipline: and essentially distinct from presbyters. On the contrary, he every where divides the clergy into two classes, the one including bishops and presbyters, and the other deacons.[6] The Cyprianic bishop had not sole or absolute power. He had not the presidency over a plurality of congregations. He had not a negative voice in the councils of the church. He ruled the church in common with the other presbyters, though, as president, he was called bishop. He did nothing of importance without consulting his presbyters.[7] He was chosen

1) Sacramenti veritatem omni fraternitate præsente celebrare. Ep. 63.

2) See Ep. 5; Ep. 14; Ep. 16; Ep. 17; Ep. 19; Ep. 43.

3) See Ep. 67. See also Ep. 38, and 39, where we learn that even readers were also elected in the same way.

4) Ep. 43, § 3. See Mr. Marshall's note. So also in Ep. 46. Ep. 49, concl. and Ep. 66, § 3, 'the one bishop, presiding over every church.' This, says Mr. Marshall, 'is the genuine language of pure antiquity.' See also § 6, ibid.

5) Ep. 13.

6) Ep. 3; Ep. 4; Ep. 72.

7) Ep. 6.

by the people of his charge. He administered the ordinances. He recognised in his associate presbyters the power, by divine right, to govern the church, and discharge every ministerial function, during his absence.[1] He even gives to the presbyters the name *præpositus*, or president, which he assumes to himself.[2] He defends the character of his office against Papian, by appealing to the fact that he was a priest or presbyter.[3] And he attributes to bishops no greater preëminence over presbyters than Peter had over the other apostles.[4] They were, therefore, of the same order with bishops, so that if bishops were successors of the apostles, presbyters are successors of them also.[5] 'All are pastors,' says Cyprian, 'but the flock is only one, which was fed by all the apostles, with unanimous consent.' Bishops and presbyters, therefore, are, according to Cyprian, equal, by divine right, and differ only by human custom and law; for, he affirms, 'after the resurrection each and all of the other apostles had equal power given to that of Peter.'[6]

Such was the bishop Cyprian, who, if he was not in order and in nature, a presbyter, occupying the chief seat in council and authority, was certainly removed to an infinite distance from the modern diocesan prelate.[7]

Contemporary with Cyprian was Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea, and the intimate friend of Origen and of Cyprian, among whose works an epistle of this father is preserved.[8] In this he says: 'but the other heretics, also, if they separate from the church, can have no power or grace, since all power and grace are placed in the church, where *presbyters* presided, in whom is vested the power of baptizing, and imposition of hands, and *ordination*.' The importance of this testimony must be evident. It was given by a bishop to a bishop, and preserved among the writings of that bishop. We must regard it, therefore, as conclusive evidence of the opinions of these fathers, and of the custom of the age. The

1) Ep. 5 and 6.
2) Ep. 10, 11, 62.
3) Ep. to Papianus.
4) De Unit. Eccl.
5) This is the opinion of Mr. Dodwell. See Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 117.
6) De Unit. Eccl.
7) See Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 308. On the testimony of Cyprian, see Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 113–117, 339; Powell on Apost. Succ. pp. 60–62; Anderson's Defence, p. 187. Lauders's Ancient Bishops Considered; Causa Episcopatus Hier. Lucifiega on the Principles of the Cyprianic Age. Edinb. 1706, 4to.; Dr. Wilson's Primit. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 69–81. Rule's Cyprianic Bishop Examined; Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus. Edinb. 1705; and Boyse's Anct. Episcop. p. 152, &c.; Plea for Presbytery, pp. 264–266.
8) Ep. 65th; see Wks. of Cyprian, Ed. Bened. Venetus, 1728, p. 302.

whole plenitude of episcopal power, authority, and functions, is here explicitly vested in presbyters; and Cyprian, whatever he may have said of episcopal dignity, never left on record any disavowal or disapprobation of this testimony. Presbyters, therefore, are the authorized and vested successors of the apostles.[1]

In connection with the testimonies of Cyprian and Firmilian may be adduced that of Novatus. Novatus was one of the presbyters in Cyprian's church. During Cyprian's concealment from the rage of persecution, Novatus ordained Felicissimus a deacon. Now, although Cyprian blames him for his factious ambition, in not consulting him, yet he neither deprived him, or his appointed deacon, of orders, nor did he cease to speak well of Novatus in the year following.[2] So the only hindrance, existing at this time, to the exercise of the power of ordination by presbyters, was ecclesiastical rule. This appears further, from the fact, that, during the vacancy of the church, the presbyters at Rome continued to govern, and in all things to manage that church, by their common council.[3]

1) On the testimony of Firmilian, see Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 117; Schism, p. 143; Powell on Apost. Succ. p. 62; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. pp. 82–84; Jameson's Cyprianus Isotimus, pp. 413, 418, 419, where his testimony is fully vindicated.

2) See Ep. 6, 31, 40, 49, 58.

3) See ibid, Ep. 31.

# CHAPTER IV.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE LATER FATHERS IN FAVOR OF THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY TO THE TRUE MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION.

### § 1. *The great importance of the testimony of the later fathers in favor of presbytery.*

We have no design of taking up these fathers seriatim. This, we have shown, would be useless. We have now reached a period in our testimonies, when prelacy was becoming and soon became the established polity of the churches generally. Of course, the writers of the church are to be expected to acquiesce in the system, and to justify it. Their testimony, as to its apostolicity, would be of no manner of importance. The only question is, did all thus silently acquiesce, and were none found ready to bear their testimony in favor of the original constitution of the church, and against the existing hierarchy? We shall endeavor to show, that there were such witnesses; that, therefore, even within the bosom of the corrupted hierarchy, the voice of reprobation was never silent; and that the light of truth, however obscured, never ceased to burn, until, at the era of the reformation, it broke forth into the full blaze of its primeval glory. These testimonies will be of further use, in showing who it is that presumptuously set up their private interpretation of the fathers, and make them profess belief in what they never dreamt of.[1] But they will be found still more important. Mr. Newman, and high-church prelatists generally, tell us, that 'three centuries and more were necessary for the infant church to attain her mature and perfect form and due stature,'[2] and that, therefore, we are to

1) See Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 439, 440.

2) British Mag. vol. ix. p. 359; and the Ch. of our Fath.; see the Churchm. Monthly Rev. 1842, pp. 506, 507, &c.

look to the fathers of that age, for its true polity. It is thus admitted, that the church system of the fourth century, differed from that of the first and second, and also from that of the sixteenth, so that, 'they are not only diverging but contrary,' and so, that 'it is impossible for the same mind to sympathize with both.'[1] The fact of a change is thus admitted,[2] and it is fully corroborated by every testimony we can produce from these fathers, to the original character and condition of the church. We are led, therefore, to inquire, what that change and that system could be, which is congenial to such minds as the fathers of the fourth century, and with which, all who are of an evangelical spirit, cannot possibly sympathize. What was that church system and polity, patronized and advanced by Basil, Athanasius, and Ambrose? And who, that examines, *a priori*, the prophecies of God's word, or *a posteriori*, the lineaments of this hierarchical system, can doubt, whether IT was the mystery of iniquity, foretold by holy men of God, as at this very period about to manifest itself. All antiquity assures us, that the power which hindered its manifestation, in the days of the apostles, and which was known to the Thessalonians, (*ye know what withholdeth.*) but which the apostle avoided explicitly naming, was the imperial power of Rome.[3] And it was at this very period, A. D. 330, the removal of the government from Rome to Constantinople, and the final overthrow of the Roman empire, (A. D. 476,) took place. The church of Ambrose's days, had made great additions to apostolic christianity, so that it might well be called 'another gospel;' and also to apostolic polity, so that, 'the two systems are not only diverging but contrary.' On this point we might enlarge, but it is unnecessary, since the writings of Mr. Taylor are in every one's hands.[4] It is in this view of it, we are led to regard this controversy in its true light, not merely as one affecting externals, but as deeply implicating the fundamentals of our faith. And every testimony we may be able to adduce, will be another warning voice, calling on us to beware; to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

1) Froude's Rem. vol. iii. p. 29; in ibid, p. 508.

2) See, also, Sinclair's Vind. of the Ep. or Apost. Succ. p. 31.

3) This is granted by the Oxf. Tr. No. 83; see Ch. Monthly Rev. as above, p. 509.

4) Anct. Christ. vol. i. and espec. vol. ii.; see also the Churchm. Rev. as above, which clearly establishes the point.

## § 2. *The testimony of the fathers generally, in favor of presbytery, and of Eusebius.*

The learned Whitaker, a divine of the English church says,[1] 'if Aerius was a heretic in this point, he had Jerome to be his neighbor in that heresy, and not only him, but other fathers, both Greek and Latin, as is confessed by Medina. Aerius thought, that presbyter did not differ from bishop, by any divine law and authority; and the same thing was contended for by Jerome, and he defended it by those very scripture testimonies which Aerius did. But how childishly and foolishly Epiphanius answered to these testimonies, every one may see.'[2]

To these we add the remarkable testimony of the Rev. Mr. Palmer, the most able and learned advocate of high-church and semi-popish prelacy of the present day.[3] 'If it were advisable to enter on this question at any extent, it might be easily shown, that there is very considerable authority from tradition, in favor of the identity in order, of the first and second degrees of the ministry. I mean, that the title of bishop or presbyter might be applied to both, though the bishops or presbyters of the first class are distinguished from those of the second, *jure divino*. We find, that Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Firmilian, and others, sometimes only speak of two orders in the church, that is, bishops or presbyters, and deacons; or else mention the pastors of the first order, under the title of presbyters. Besides this, many writers employ language and arguments, which go directly to prove the identity of the first and second degrees of the ministry, in *order*. Amongst these may probably be mentioned, Jerome, Hilary, the deacon, Chrysostom, Augustine, Theodoret, Sedulius, Primasius, Isidore, Hispalensis, Bede, Alcuin, the synod of Aix, in 1819, Amalarius, and others, quoted by Morinus.' To the same purpose, we might adduce the testimony of Mr. Reynolds;[4] of bishop Morton,[5] and others. But, to use the words of Rivet,[6] whosoever shall consider their answers, collected by Six-

1) Cont. 4, Quest. 1. c. 3, § xxx. in Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. p. 575.

2) See, also, to the same effect, Bellarmine de Cleric. l. i. c. 15, in Ayton, p. 574; also, Dr. John Edwards, in Remains, p. 253; in Presb. Ord. Def. p. 65; Willet's Syn. Pap. 275.

3) Treatise on the Church, vol. ii. p. 375, Eng. ed. part vi. ch. i.; also, pp. 398, 400, 403, 409.

4) See his letter to Sir Francis Knolls, given in Neal, and in Boyse's Anct. Christ. p. 13, &c.

5) Apol. Cathol. part i. c. 33, pp. 96, 97; in Baxter's Disput. Pref. p. 14.

6) Cath. Orth. tom. i. p. 386, in Jameson's Fund. p. 23.

tus Senensis, Biblioth. lib. vi. annot. 319, 323, 324, they shall presently perceive, that all their distinctions are most pitiful elusions; and that, indeed, all these fathers were no less presbyterian than Aerius, although they accommodate themselves to the custom then received; lest for a matter not contrary to the foundations of religion, they should have broken the unity of the church. What do our opposites herein, but espouse what the Romanists, in whom any ingenuity remains, have long since disowned?'

We will only add the testimony of Stillingfleet.[1] 'I do as yet,' says he, 'despair of finding any one single testimony, in all antiquity, which doth in plain terms assert episcopacy, as it was settled by the practice of the primitive church, in ages following the apostles, to be of unalterable divine right.'

Eusebius was born, probably, about A. D. 270, and flourished A. D. 320, at which time he was bishop of Cæsarea. We will give much of what we have to say of this father, in the words of a recent episcopalian.[2] 'Nor will those, who would maintain for the episcopate a more exclusive claim, find it easy to establish, from the earliest christian writers, the sole right of bishops to ordain. What, for instance, have we of higher authority than the history of *Eusebius:* who tells us, speaking of the first ages of the church, that 'the greater part of the disciples, then living, affected with great zeal towards the word of God, first distributed their substance among the poor, and then, taking their journey, fulfilled the work and office of evangelists, preaching Christ among them which had not yet heard the gospel.' And these men, having planted the faith in sundry new and strange places, *ordained there other pastors*, committing unto them the tillage of the ground, and the oversight of the newly-converted, passing themselves unto other people and countries, being holpen thereunto by the grace of God.'[3] Now, without contending for the literal and extreme accuracy of this sketch, we cannot avoid seeing in it the impression of Eusebius, himself a bishop of the Nicene age, that ordination might be given by evangelists, or missionaries, who themselves *were not of the episcopal rank*. The disciples of whom he speaks, and whom he describes as very numerous, EVIDENTLY WERE NOT BISHOPS, for it is an essential feature in the character of a bishop, that he is set over a church already existing, and requiring an overseer to

1) Irenicum, pp. 31, 276.
2) The able author of Essays on the Church, Lond. 1840, pp. 252, 253.
3) Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 33.

rule its various elders and deacons. But these evangelists went forth among the heathen, to preach the gospel, and to found infant churches; and wherever they went, 'they *ordained*,' says Eusebius, 'other pastors' from among their converts, and thus filled the world with the christian faith. Such is the fact which this Nicene bishop relates, and which excites in his mind no surprise or displeasure, as if the episcopal functions had been usurped. The conclusion is obvious, that such a practice was not unknown, nor even uncommon, in the primitive times. Such glimpses of the practice of the early church make us shrink from the high pretensions of the modern exalters of episcopacy. But this is not all. When Eusebius gives us formal catalogues of bishops, in succession, from the apostles' times until his own, he himself warns us against laying too much stress on his information; frankly confessing 'that he was obliged to rely much on *tradition*, and that he could trace no footsteps of other historians going before him, only in a few narratives.' This confession of Eusebius, we shall present in the words of the great Milton. 'Eusebius, the ancientest writer of church history extant, confesses, in the fourth chapter of his third book, that it was no easy matter to tell, who were those that were left bishops of the churches by the apostles, more than what a man might gather from the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistles of St. Paul, in which number he reckons Timothy for bishop of Ephesus. So as may plainly appear, that this tradition of bishoping Timothy over Ephesus, was but taken for granted out of that place in St. Paul, which was only an entreating him to tarry at Ephesus, to do something left him in charge. Now if Eusebius, a famous writer, thought it so difficult to tell who were appointed bishops by the apostles, much more may we think it difficult to *Leontius*, an obscure bishop, speaking beyond his own diocese; and certainly, much more hard was it for either of them to determine what *kind* of bishops these were, if they had so little means to know *who* they were; and much less reason have we to stand to their definitive sentence; seeing they have been so rash as to raise up such lofty bishops and bishopricks, out of places of scripture merely misunderstood. Thus, while we leave the Bible, to gad after these traditions of the ancients, we hear the ancients themselves confessing, that what knowledge they had in this point, was such as they had gathered from the Bible.'[1]

1) Milton, against Prelat. Episc. p. 3.

## § 3. *The testimony of Hilary.*

Hilary, of Poictiers, was born at the close of the third century, and flourished A. D. 354. On Eph. 4: 11, 12, he says,[1] among other things, 'for also Timothy, who had been created by himself (Paul) a presbyter, he denominates a bishop, because presbyters were at first called bishops, seeing that one receding, the next might succeed to his place. Finally, in Egypt, presbyters ordain, if a bishop be not present. But because the presbyters, who came afterwards, began to be found unworthy to hold the highest office, the custom was changed, a council 'providing, that not succession, but merit, should create a bishop, constituted by the judgment of many presbyters, lest an unworthy person should rashly intrude, and become an offence to many.' Hilary thought Timothy to have been, by his ordination, a presbyter, and, also, by the same ordination, a bishop, because presbyters were so denominated in the days of the apostle. Moreover, he asserts, that presbyters presided successively, by which he means, that they came to be primi, or bishops, in a modern sense of the word, according to seniority in ordination, until by a canon of council it was decreed, that the successor should be appointed according to merit.' 'Whether the term *consignant*, expressed the confirmation of the baptized, or the imposition of hands on those who were ordained, or on penitents, it was correctly accomplished by the presbyter, in the absence of the bishop, whose preference was founded only on custom and canons: but these could not have legalized such act of a presbyter, had his authority not been apostolical.' On 1 Tim. 3, he observes,[2] that the apostle, 'after the bishop, subjoins the ordination of the deacon; why? unless the ordination of the bishop and of the presbyter is one, for each of them is a priest. But the bishop is first, seeing every bishop is a presbyter, not every presbyter a bishop; for he is a bishop, who is first among the presbyters. Finally, he represents Timothy to have been ordained a presbyter, but because he had not another before him, he was a bishop. Whence, also, he shows, that he may, after the like manner, ordain a bishop. For it was neither right nor lawful, that an inferior should ordain a superior, for no one confers what he has not received.' After a few sentences he adds: 'but they ought to be seven deacons and some presbyters, that there may be two in every church, and one

1) Dr. Wilson, ibid, p. 112.

2) Ambrose, Oper. tom. iii. p. 272.

bishop in a city.'[1] Writing in the middle of the fourth century, this last sentence accords with the circumstances of his day, and discovers his own acquiescence in the authority of the church. Nevertheless, he shows his clear discernment of ancient facts, when he affirms, that there was but one ordination for the bishop and the presbyter, and their office the same. The word *primus*, where it first occurs in this quotation, has been supposed to agree with *sacerdos;* but that it governs *presbyterorum*, understood, and takes its gender, is evident from his own explanation: '*hic enim episcopus est, qui inter presbyteros primus est.*'[2] Besides, also, the superiority of Timothy is not ascribed to a higher order of priesthood, but to his being a *primus presbyter;* for since Timothy was directed to ordain bishops, he could not have done this, if, instead of being in equal grade, a 'primus,' he had been an '*inferior presbyter.*'[3]

### 4 §. *The testimony of Damasus.*

Damasus was bishop of Rome, A. D. 366. His testimony is thus given by Dr. Willet.[4] '*Damasus, non amplius quam duos ordines*, &c. We read but of two orders among the disciples of Christ, that is, of the twelve apostles, and the seventy disciples; and who are now in the place of those, Innocentius showeth, decret. Greg. lib. i. tit. xiv. c. 9. *Hos solos Primitiva Ecclesia*, &c. The primitive church only had these two sacred orders of priests and deacons.'

### § 5. *The testimony of Aerius.*

Aerius, presbyter of Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste, flourished A. D. 368. He maintained 'that, *jure divino*, by divine appointment, there was no difference between bishops and presbyters.' Thus Epiphanius represents him as asking,[5] 'as to what is a bishop before a presbyter? In what do they differ? The order is the same, the honor one, and the excellence one; the bishop imposes hands, and so does the presbyter; the bishop performs the whole of public worship, and the presbyter in like manner; the bishop sits upon a throne, and so does the presbyter.' Epiphanius, accordingly, charges Aerius, first, with teaching that the apostle, in 1 Tim. 3, enumerates the qualifications, not of prelates, but of

1) Ibidem.
2) Skinner, p. 219.
3) See further extracts, in Dr. Wilson, pp. 109, 116, 117.
4) In Willet, Syn. Pap. p. 273.
5) Adv. Hæres. l. iii. tom. i. p. 906, in Dr. Wilson, p. 125.

presbyter bishops and deacons; secondly, with representing 1 Tim. 4: 14, as proving that Timothy was ordained, not by the hands of an office, but of the presbytery; and, thirdly, that he considered the apostle, in Titus 1: 5–7, as speaking of the same persons as bishops and presbyters, calling them indifferently by either name: that is, with being a thorough presbyterian.[1]

Now this testimony is of great importance, because it was not the judgment of Aerius alone, but of an immense number in that and the following ages. Indeed, but for the fierce persecutions with which the adherents of these opinions were hunted down, by the *merciful* claimants to prelatical apostolical succession, we have every reason to believe, that they would have become general, or, at least, have left the opposing hierarchy in an unenviable minority. Aerius appealed to the scriptures, and 'seems,' says Mosheim, 'to have aimed to reduce religion to its primitive simplicity.' 'His doctrine,' as the same historian adds, 'was pleasing to many who were disgusted with the pride and arrogance of the bishops of that age.' He found 'a great multitude,' as Fleury says, 'to follow him, so that Armenia, Pontus, and Cappadocia, were rent by the schism.'[2] The prelatical party drove these contenders for apostolical order from the churches, from the cities, and the villages. But even then they still continued to assemble in the woods, in caverns, and in the open country, even when the ground was covered with snow.[3]

Great have been the efforts of the proud and ambitious prelates, to obscure the lustre of this wide spread testimony, to the truth of presbytery. None of the writings of Aerius have been allowed to come down to us. We learn his sentiments only through the representations of his cruel enemies. He is, therefore, as is the case with the Paulicians, the Nestorians, the Waldenses, and the Reformers, covered with obloquy and branded with outrageous heresy. And for the truth of this, a thousand authorities are produced. But when we come to examine them they are every one of them bottomed upon Epiphanius, who treats of Aerius in a perfect frenzy of passion; who is notorious for credulity; who stands convicted of many historical mistakes; who gives no sufficient evidence, for his calumnious reproach; and who is, therefore, altogether unworthy of credit.[4] But, let this be as it may, it affects not

1) See Dr. Wilson, pp. 146, 147.

2) Tom. iv. B. xix.

3) Ibid.

4) See this subject fully cleared up, and the contradictions of Epiphanius shown, in Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, pp. 24–30. See

the testimony of Aerius, in favor of presbytery. The *heresy* of Aerius, if he was heretic, cannot be made to lie in this; since it has been already shown, that his judgment was approved by the very wisest among all the fathers. 'Jerome's opinion,' says Saravia, 'was all one with that of Aerius.'[1] So teach also the archbishop of Spalato,[2] and Alphonsus De Castro.[3] Bishop Morton affirms that Jerome taught the same doctrine, on this point, as Aerius; 'neither,' says he, 'do other fathers assert any thing different.' He then adduces the testimony of Medina, already given, and of Valentinus, the Jesuit.[4] He goes on to show, that such also were the sentiments of Erasmus,[5] Alphonsus, Bellarmine, Anselmus, Sedulius, and Cassander;[6] and then asks, whether if these fathers had believed that his opinion of Aerius had been condemned as *a heresy*, they would ever have given it their sanction, or been tolerated in so doing.[7]

### § 6. *The testimony of Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssene, and Ambrose.*

Basil was bishop of Cæsarea, A. D. 370. In his commentary on Isaiah 3: 2, he says,[8] on the word 'ancient,' (*elder*,) 'among the things that are threatened, is also the removal of the elder, seeing that the advantage of his presence is not small. An elder is he, who is dignified with the first seat, and enrolled in the presbytery, bearing the character of a presbyter; especially, indeed, if he be an unmarried man, or if even, according to the law of the Lord,[9] the husband of one wife, having faithful children, &c.; this is the elder whom the Lord will take away from a sinful people.' 'This elucidation of the character of a Jewish elder,' says Dr. Wilson, 'in the words of Paul's description of a christian bishop, evinces that Basil knew that in the days of the apostles, the office was the same.[10] The testimony of this bishop of bishops is a candid confession, that, at the first, the occupant of the highest seat in a church, was a presbyter.'

also Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. pp. 125, 126. Bishop Reynolds's Letter to Sir Francis Knolls, as above, Smectymnuus, p. 89. Burton's Bampton Lect. p. 175. Baxter on Episcop. p. 96.

1) De. Div. Grad. Min. Ev. c. 23.
2) De. Rep. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 2.
3) Contra Hæres, fol. 103, B. and 104.
4) Tom. iv. disp. ix. q. 1, punct. ii.
5) Annot. in 1 Tim. 4.
6) Lib. Consult. art. xiv.
7) See Cathol. Apol. part i. c. 33, pp. 96, 97.
8) In Dr. Wilson, p. 128.
9) Titus 1: 6–9.
10) Basil, tom. ii. p. 96.

In his 'Morals,' he classes together in one chapter, directed to the same object, the scriptural character and duties of bishops and presbyters, taken from the epistles to Timothy and Titus, and places them under the title of 'what things are said conjunctly, concerning bishops and presbyters.'[1] Again, this writer adds, 'Christ says, lovest thou me, Peter, more than these? Feed my sheep. And from these he gave to all pastors and doctors equal power; whereof this is a token, that all of them, as did Peter, bind and loose. This is so plain, that it needs no commentary.'

Gregory Nazianzen, so called, from his having been bishop of Nazianzum, flourished A. D. 370. 'The piety of this father,' says Dr. Wilson,[2] 'forbids us to think he would have inveighed against ecclesiastical preëminence, if he had thought the higher clerical orders of his day founded on the sacred scriptures; yet he complains: 'how I wish there had been no precedence, no priority of *place*, no authoritative dictatorship, that we might be distinguished by virtue only. But now this right hand, and left hand, and middle and higher and lower; this going before, and following in company, have produced to us much unprofitable affliction, brought many into a snare, and thrust them away into the company of the goats; not only of the inferior class, but also of the shepherds, who, being masters in Israel, have not known these things.' Speaking of the succession of Athanathius to the seat of Mark, in Alexandria, he observes: 'sameness of doctrine is sameness of chair, and opposition of sentiments is also opposition of office, for the one has the name and the other the truth of the succession.'[3] In a letter to Philagrius, he says, 'we are worn out, striving against envy and consecrated bishops, who destroy the common peace, and subordinate the word of faith to their own love of superiority.'[4] In a description of the church at Byzantium, he observes, 'behold the bench of presbyters, dignified by age and understanding; the regularity of the deacons, not far from the same spirit; the decency of the readers; the attention of the people, as well in the men, as in the women, equal in virtue.'[5] Here are only presbyters, deacons, readers, and people, and yet, this church cannot be presumed to have been defective of any class of officers existing in other churches. Again,[6] 'As the presbyter is a minister, he is to preach; as he is a ruler, he is to make

1) Basil, tom. ii. p. 491.
2) Prim. Govt. p. 131.
3) Greg. Naz. vol. i. p. 484.
4) Idem. vol. i. p. 377.
5) Idem. vol. i. p. 823.
6) Vol. i. p. 517.

rules (or canons) for bishops and presbyters. And further, he ascends from being governed to be a governor; again, he is to feed the souls of men; to lead and conduct others in the way of truth; to act the joint-priest with Christ; to build and rear up the world that is above; nay, and to be a head of the fulness of Christ.'[1]

Gregory Nyssene was bishop of Nyssa, whence he is called Nyssene, and flourished A. D. 371. Though a bishop, he was evidently nothing more than the pastor of a church, as is manifest from his own words.[2] Thus he observes,[3] 'that all should not intrude themselves into a knowledge of the mysteries, but choosing one from themselves, able to understand divine things, they should submissively hear; esteeming worthy of faith whatever they should learn of him. For it is said, all are not apostles, nor all prophets, but this is not now observed in many of the churches.' In another place, speaking of his own ordination, he says,[4] 'to us has come the public ministration of the spiritual supper, whom it would better become to participate with, than to communicate to others.' The feast here intended is that of the gospel, from the preaching of which he had hoped to be excused.

After an apostrophe to the aged Simeon, of whom he had been discoursing, Gregory turns to those who preside in the churches, and says: 'Seeing to you, and to such as you, adorned with hoary wisdom from above, who are presbyters indeed, and justly styled the fathers of the church, the word of God conducts us to learn the doctrines of salvation, saying, (Deut. 32: 7,) 'Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.' 'Here,' says Dr. Wilson, 'those who presided in the churches are denominated, without exception, presbyters; and the official sense is clearly exhibited by an allusion to the appellative meaning of the term. But neither episcopal superiority, nor clerical subordination, find a place. The latter had not indeed then come into existence; and though the former every where prevailed, and even in the writer himself, yet his early impressions guided him to the truth, and his piety rendered him dead to the empty distinctions of a perishing world.'

Ambrose was made archbishop of Milan, A. D. 374, within a week after he was baptized a christian. In his commentary upon the words, 'the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,' &c., in the Apocalypse, he observes: 'we

1) See in Dr. Wilson, ibid.
2) See in Dr. Wilson, pp. 135, 136, and Dr. Ayton, p. 569.
3) Greg. Nyss. oper. vol. i. p. 220.
4) Vol. i. p. 372.

ought, therefore, to understand the seven angels to be the rectors or presidents of the seven churches,[1] because angel means messenger, and they who announce the word of God to the people are not improperly called angels, that is, messengers.' Syricius appears to have written to Syrus, the presbyter of Ambrose,[2] to reprove him for inattention to his charge. Ambrose concurs, denominating Syrus brother, and co-presbyter, '*fratrem nostrum et compresbyterum Syrum.*' 'I do not claim,' he says, 'the honor of the apostles, for who had this, but those whom the Son of God himself chose; nor the grace of prophets, nor the authority of evangelists, nor the circumspection of pastors: but the attention and diligence concerning the divine writings, which the apostles placed last among the duties of the saints, I wish only to attain; for, snatched from benches of justice, and robes of government, unto the priesthood, I have begun to teach you, what I have not myself learned.'[3]

## § 7. *The testimony of Epiphanius, and of the Apostolical Constitutions and Canons.*

Epiphanius was metropolitan of Cyprus, in A. D. 366. He was a high-toned prelate, and did much to exalt the hierarchy to its bad preëminence, identifying the episcopal authority with the sacerdotal and regal officers of Christ. Even with him, however, the bishop is a pastor. The representation, already given, of the churches in Alexandria, while under their respective presbyters, at the head of whom was the president of the original church, is fully confirmed by Epiphanius. 'They say that he, (Aerius,) a Lybian by descent, having become a presbyter in Alexandria, *presided*, ἐφιστατο, over a church called Baucalis. For as many churches as are of the catholic church, at Alexandria, are under one archbishop; and over these, individually, *presbyters* are placed, to administer to the ecclesiastical exigences of the neighboring inhabitants.'[4]

The Apostolical Constitutions which are attributed to Clement, are regarded as having been, in substance, composed in the third century, and completed in the fifth.'[5] In this view,

1) Tom. v. p. 183.
2) Ibid, p. 112.
3) Amb. tom. iv. 1, in ibid.
4) Hær. 69, s. i. in Dr. Wilson, p. 151. Baxter on Episcop. p. 96. Burton's Bampton Lect. p. 175. See Boyse's Anct. Episcop. p. 173. Jameson's Sum, &c. pp. 156 – 160.
5) See Daillé Proceni. Codex. Can. et lib. i. § 3, 4. Boyse's Anc. Episc. pp. 150 – 152. Riddle's Ch. Antiq. p. 122. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. pp. 151, 152.

says Mr. Riddle,[1] they contribute to give us an insight into the state of christian faith, the condition of the clergy and inferior ecclesiastical officers, the worship and discipline of the church, and other particulars, at the period to which the composition is referred. The growth of the episcopal power and influence, and the pains and artifices employed, in order to derive it from the apostles, are here partially developed.

That the bishop, described in these works, was no more than a congregational or parish-bishop, is evident to any, that will impartially consider the following quotations: Lib. ii. cap. 10. Having exhorted the bishop to a blameless life, lest he bring a stain on his own dignity, and on the church of God, seated in his parish, they thus speak, concerning the scandalous members that may be brought before him.[2] 'When the offender shall know, that the bishop and deacons are blameless, and the flock undefiled, he will, at first, being terrified in his own conscience, not dare contemptuously to enter into the church of God. But if, not regarding that, he shall enter, he will either straight be reproved, &c., and punished, or, being admonished by his pastor, he will become penitent. And having beheld every one, and finding no spot (or stain) in either the bishop or in the people subject to him, being filled with confusion and compunction, he will peaceably go out with shame, and with many tears. And the flock will continue pure, but he will mourn in the sight of God and repent of his sin; so he will have good hope, and the whole flock, seeing his tears, will learn, that the offender, by repentance, is delivered from destruction.' Again, cap. 18, 'Let the bishop take care of all, both of those that have not sinned, that they may persevere in their innocence, and of those that have sinned, that they may repent. For to you the Lord saith, see that ye despise not one of these little ones. Wherefore, take upon thee the care of all, as one that must give an account to God for many. Preserve the sound, reprove offenders, and raise up those by remission, that are cast down with fasting, and receive again him that sighs, the whole church interceding for him, and laying hands on him, suffer him to remain with the flock. But for the drowsy and sluggish, rouse, support, quicken, encourage him, as knowing how great a reward thou wilt receive, if thou dost it, and how great a danger thou wilt incur by neglecting it.'[3]

Numerous other passages might be quoted, which demonstrate the fact, that whenever these constitutions were adopted

1) Christian Antiq. p. 122.
2) Constitut. Apostol. lib. ii. cap. 10. See also cap. 12.
3) Cap. 27, 28, 31, 34, 44, 54, 57, 58, 59. Lib. viii. cap. 4, 30, 31.

and written, the bishop was nothing more than a presbyterian or parochial pastor.[1]

This is equally plain from the apostolical canons.[2] Can. 2 'enjoins, that nothing be offered at the altar, but oil and incense. But all other fruits were to be sent home, and not to the altar, for the bishops and presbyters; for they were to distribute them to the deacons and other clergy.' Can. 6 'orders the excommunication of a bishop or presbyter, or deacon, that neglects to communicate when the eucharist is celebrated.' Can. 7 'orders the same concerning the faithful, or members of the bishop's church.' Can. 11 'forbids a bishop to go out of his parish to invade another man's. And Can. 12 forbids the same to a presbyter or other clergyman.' Can. 23. 'If any bishop obtain a church by the interest of secular princes, (or rulers,) let him be deposed and excommunicated, and all that communicate with him.' Can. 24. 'If any presbyter, despising his own bishop, shall set up a congregation apart, and set up another altar, (or communion-table,) when he cannot justly condemn his bishop, for any defect of piety or justice, let him be deposed, as one desirous of domination, &c.' See also Can. 27, 28. Can. 50. 'If a bishop or presbyter neglect the clergy or the people, and teach them not piety, let him be excommunicated, and if he continue slothful, let him be deposed.'

It is most manifest, says Mr. Boyse, that if we apply all these passages to a *parochial bishop*, that has only one communion-table for his whole church, there is not only no force offered to them, but every thing in them is easy and plain, intelligible and accountable. But if we apply them to a *diocesan bishop* and a *diocesan church*, there is such a heap of contradictions and utter impossibilities, that no man can digest them, whose throat is not wide enough to swallow *transubstantiation* itself.

### § 8. *The testimony of Cœlus Sedulus Scotus, and of Chrysostom.*

This British author flourished about the year 390. 'Cœlus Sedulus Scotus, one of the ancientest of our own writers, says Mr. Prynne,[3] flourishing about the year of our Lord 390, determines thus of the parity of bishops and presbyters, by divine right, against our lordly prelates' doctrine, in these days,

1) See B. ii. c. 27, 28, 31, 34, 44, 54, 57, all 58, 59. B. viii. c. 4, 30, 31.

2) See in ibid, p. 140, &c.

3) In Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. pp. 313, 314.

in his exposition on Titus, chapter 1. For a bishop must be blameless, &c. He calleth him a bishop, whom before he named a presbyter. Before, by the devil's instinct, parties were made in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, but I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas, the churches were governed with the common counsel of the presbyters; but after that every one thought those whom he baptized to be his, not Christ's, it was decreed, throughout the world, that one chosen of the presbyters should be set over the rest, to whom all the care of the church should appertain, and that the seeds of schisms should be taken away. In the Acts of the Apostles it is written, that when the apostle Paul came to Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of that church, unto whom, among other things, he spake thus: Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. And here observe more diligently, how that he, calling the elders of but one city, Ephesus, doth afterwards style them bishops; these things I have alleged, that we might show how, that among the ancients, *fuisse presbyteros quos episcopos*, presbyters to have been the same that bishops were; but, by little and little, that the seeds of dissension might be utterly extirpated, the whole care was transferred to one.' And on 1 Timothy, 53, it is demanded, (writes he,) why Paul here makes no mention of presbyters, but only of bishops and deacons? *Sed etiam ipsos in episcoporum nomine comprehendit;* but truly he also comprehendeth them in the name of bishops.'

Chrysostom was bishop of Constantinople, A. D. 398. Although he went entirely along with the prelatical system of his day, he evidently did not find support in the scriptures for any thing like the divine right of diocesan episcopacy. Having recited 1 Tim. 3: 3–10, he observes: 'Having spoken of bishops and characterized them, saying both what they should possess, and from what they should abstain, and omitting the order of presbyters, Paul has passed over to the deacons. But why is this? Because there is not much difference. For these, also, in like manner, have been set over the teaching and government of the church, and what things he has said concerning bishops, the same also he intended for presbyters; for they have gained the ascendency over them only in respect of ordaining, and of this thing also they appear to have robbed the presbyters.'[1]

1) Wks. vol. ix. p. 1574.

The condition of the church could have then been better known to no one than to this primate; yet, when discoursing on the scriptures, he expressly allows government and doctrine to have been given equally, and by the same means, to presbyters and to bishops; that the latter had gained the ascendency only in ordination, which they had injuriously taken from the presbyters; for such is the force of *πλεονεξια*, followed by an accusative.[1]

The bishop, as represented by Chrysostom, was clearly not a diocesan prelate, but the presiding officer in one single congregation. Thus on Titus, 3: 6, he says: 'That thou *mayest ordain elders*, says the apostle. He means bishops. In *every city*, says he, for he would not have the whole island committed to one man; but that every one should have and mind his own proper cure; for so he knew the labor would be easier to him, and the people to be governed would have more care taken of them; since their teacher would not run about to govern many churches, but would attend to the ruling of one only, and so would keep it in good order.' In his work on the priesthood, he styles presbyters 'the court or sanhedrim of the presbyters,' thus giving to them the power of jurisdiction.[2] In Homily 1, on Phil. he teaches, that in the beginning, the same individual was called presbyter and bishop,[3] in glorious contradiction to his attempted limitation of these passages to bishops, and thus proving his interior convictions. This appears also from the manner in which he speaks of the priesthood, and the supereminent dignity he ascribes to it.[4]

## § 9. *The testimony of Jerome.*

Jerome flourished about A. D. 380, and was universally regarded as one of the most pious and learned men of his day. Erasmus says, that 'he was, without controversy, the most learned of all christians, the prince of divines, and, for eloquence, he excelled Cicero.' There is no name among all the fathers, which carries with it greater influence and authority, throughout the prelatic hierarchy, than that of Jerome. Nor is there any other individual who has given his testimony more fully in favor of presbytery, as the true, primitive, and apostolical form of church government.

1) Dr. Wilson, p. 157.
2) Lib. iii. c. 15. Plea for Presb. p. 189.
3) Works, tom. ii. p. 224.
4) See the passages given in Clarke's Sacred Literat. vol. ii. pp. 64, 65, Eng. ed.

We will first present the substance of this testimony. In his Commentary on Titus we have the following passage.[1] 'Let us diligently attend to the words of the apostle, who, discoursing in what follows, what sort of presbyter is to be ordained, saith, if any one be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c., afterwards adds, for a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, &c. A presbyter, therefore, is the same as a bishop; and before there were, by the devil's instinct, parties in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,[2] the churches were governed by the common council of presbyters. But *afterwards*, when every one thought, that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ's, it was determined, through the whole world, that one of the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom all care of the church should belong, that the seeds of schism might be taken away. If any suppose, that it is merely *our* opinion, and not that of the scriptures, that bishop and presbyter are the same, and that one is the name of *age*, the other of *office*, let him read the words of the apostles to the *Philippians*, saying, *Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. Philippi* is a city of *Macedonia*, and certainly, in one city, there could not be more than one bishop, as they are *now* styled. But at that time they called the same men *bishops* whom they called *presbyters;* therefore, he speaks indifferently of bishops as of presbyters. This may seem, even yet, doubtful to some, till it be proved by another testimony. It is written, in the Acts of the apostles, that when the apostle *came to Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the presbyters of that church*, to whom, among other things, he said, *Take heed to yourselves*, &c. Here observe diligently, that calling together the *presbyters* of one city, *Ephesus*, he afterwards styles the same persons *bishops*. If any will receive that epistle, which is written in the name of *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, there also

1) Hieron. Op. tom. iv. p. 413, Bened. ed.

2) 'Some episcopal writers have attempted, from this allusion of *Jerome*, to 1 Cor. 1 : 12, to infer, that he dates episcopacy as early as the dispute at *Corinth*, to which this passage refers. But this inference is effectually refuted by two considerations. In the *first* place, *Jerome* adduces proof, that *bishop* and *presbyter* were originally *the same*, from portions of the New Testament, which were certainly written *after* the first epistle to the *Corinthians*. In the *second* place, that language of the apostle, *one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos*, &c., has been familiarly applied in every age, by way of allusion, to *actual* divisions in the church. And were those who put this construction on *Jerome*, a little better acquainted with his writings, they would know, that, in another place, he himself applies the same passage to some disturbers of the church's peace in the *fourth* century.' Dr. Miller.

the care of the church is equally divided among many, since he writes to the people, *Obey them that have the rule over you*, &c. And *Peter*, (so called from the firmness of his faith,) in his epistle, saith, *The presbyters which are among you*, &c. These things I have written to show, that among the ancients, *presbyters* and *bishops* were the same. But, BY LITTLE AND LITTLE, that all the seeds of dissension might be plucked up, the whole care was devolved on *one*. As, therefore, the presbyters *know*, that *by the custom of the church*, they are subject to him who is their *president*, so let bishops know, that they are above presbyters more BY THE CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH, than by the TRUE DISPENSATION OF CHRIST; and that they ought to rule the church in common, imitating Moses, who, when he might alone rule the people of Israel, chose seventy with whom he might judge the people.'

These sentiments Jerome has repeated, at length, in an epistle written to Evagrius,[1] and to Oceanum.[2]

Such were the opinions of Jerome, near the close of the fourth century, and in the face of an established hierarchy. From these extracts it will appear manifest that in Jerome's judgment, bishops and presbyters were, *in the beginning*, one and the same in title, in office, and in power: that *in his day* a departure had taken place from the primitive model, by making a distinction between bishops and presbyters, neither warranted by scripture nor conformable to the apostolic model, but originating in the decay of piety and the ambition of prelates; that this change was introduced, *by little and little*, the original president, or moderator, gradually assuming the rank of a distinct and superior order: that the first pre-eminence of bishops was such only as the presbyters were able to confer, they having been chosen by presbyters: and, finally, that deacons were not an order of ministers at all, but a class of ecclesiastical officers.[3] And that we do not misunderstand the meaning of Jerome, may be shown by the admissions of the learned. The archbishop of Spalato acknowledges that Jerome can, by no force, be reconciled to the cause of prelacy.[4] Medina, we have seen, affirms the same thing. Alphonsus de Castro reproves Thomas Waldensis for attempting to pervert the testimony of Jerome.[5] Saravia allows that Jerome agreed with Aerius.[6] Thorndike

1) Hieron. Ep. ad. Evagr. Op. tom. ii. p. 109.
2) Op. tom. ii. p. 106, in ibid.
3) See Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 122. 123.
4) De Rep. Eccl. lib. 2, c. 4. Numb. 46 in Jameson's Fund. p. 21.
5) Contra Hæres. fol. 103. B. in ibid, 22.
6) See above.

admits the same fact.[1] Bishop Bedell says, 'that a bishop and presbyter are all one, as Jerome proves from scripture and antiquity.'[2] Dr. Willet repeatedly testifies to the truth of our interpretation,[3] and adduces Bellarmine as doing the same against Delphinus.[4] Nay, our interpretation is approved by pope Gregory the seventh, and is therefore *infallibly* correct.[5] It is unnecessary to produce any further authority in support of our opinion. We will only, therefore, add, that Hooker, after exerting all his ability to put a prelatical construction upon Jerome, has left us his own solemn declaration that it was all useless and wrong. 'This answer to Saint Jerome,' says he, in his revision of his Polity, 'seemeth dangerous. I have qualified it, as I may, by some words of restraint; yet, I satisfy not myself. In my judgment, it should be altered.'[6]

It is alleged, however, that in other passages, Jerome approves of the system of prelacy, and of the three orders. That this was the established system of the church, in Jerome's day, we do not question, nor that he went along with the church in upholding it. But this has nothing to do with the private opinion of Jerome, as to what was the *primitive* and *original* constitution of the church. Attempts have also been made to torture several passages of Jerome, so as to make them contradictory to this deliberate expression of his opinion. But it is unnecessary here to repeat the full replies, which have been given to this objection, by Stillingfleet and others.[7] After examining them all, Stillingfleet declares, that[8] 'among all the fifteen testimonies produced by a learned writer, out of Jerome, for the superiority of bishops above presbyters, I cannot find one that does found it upon divine right, but only on the conveniency of such an order, for the peace and unity of the church of God. But granting some passages may have a more favorable aspect towards the superiority of bishops above presbyters, in his other writings, I would fain know whether a man's judgment must be taken from occasional and incidental passages, or from designed or set discourses? Which is as much as to ask,

1) Prim. Govt. of the Church, c. 7, p. 69.
2) In Welles's Vind. p. 142.
3) Synop. Papismi, pp. 274, 275, 277.
4) Ibid, p. 275.
5) Binii Concil tom. vii. p. 474.
6) Eccl. Pol. B. vii. § 5, and Mc Crie's Life of Melville, vol. i. p. 462.
7) Irenicum, part ii. c. 7. Boyse's Anct. Christ. pp. 182–200. Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 84, 86. Jameson's Sum of the Episc. Contr. p. 180, &c. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt pp. 148–176, where he notices the several objections.
8) Iren. p. 277.

whether the lively representation of a man, by picture, may be best taken, when, in haste of other business, he passes by us, giving only a glance of his countenance; or when he purposely and designedly sits, in order to that end, that his countenance may be truly represented?'[1]

### § 10. *The testimony of Augustine.*

Augustine was bishop of Hippo, in Africa, and flourished A. D. 395. Writing to Jerome, who was a presbyter, he says,[2] 'I entreat you to correct me faithfully, when you see I need it; for, although, according to the names of honor, *which the custom of the church has* now *brought into use*, the office of bishop is greater than that of presbyter, nevertheless, in many respects, Augustine is inferior to Jerome.' Epist. 19, *ad hierom.* It is worthy of notice that bishop Jewel in the 'Defence of his Apology for the Church of England,' produces this passage for the express purpose of showing the original identity of bishop and presbyter, and translates it thus: 'The office of bishop is above the office of priest, not by authority of the scriptures, but after the names of honor which the custom of the church hath now obtained.'[3] Again he describes the orders of his day in Africa.[4] 'A higher order contains in, and with itself, that which is less, for the presbyter performs also the duty of the deacon, and of the exorcist, and of the reader. Also, that a presbyter is to be understood to be a bishop, the apostle Paul proves, when he instructs Timothy, whom he had ordained a presbyter, what kind of a bishop he ought to create; for what is a bishop but a primus presbyter, that is, a high priest, and he calls them no otherwise than his co-presbyters, and co-priests, and may not the bishop also his deacons, his fellow-servants?'

### § 11. *The testimony of Paphnutius, Synesius, Pelagius, and Severus.*

Paphnutius lived A. D. 390. According to Cassian, he, while himself only a presbyter, ordained Daniel the hermit, his disciple, first a deacon, and afterwards a presbyter.

1) On his whole testimony, see also Dr. Miller, on the Min. Pierce's Vind. of Dissent. part iii. c. 1, pp. 74 – 80. Dr. Rice, Evang. Mag. vol. x. pp. 629, 630.

2) Ep. 19, ad Hieron. See Dr. Miller on Min. p. 124.

3) Defence, 122, 123.

4) Op. tom. iv. p. 780. In Dr. Wilson, p. 182. Indeed, these questions were not Hilary's, as Blondel thought.

Whence it follows, as Blondel argues, that the power of ordination was regarded, even then, as inherently belonging to presbyters.[1] Synesius was bishop of Ptolemais, in Pentapolis, A. D. 410. 'He[2] distributes the officers of the church into the Levite, the presbyter, and the bishop, the latter of whom he denominates the priest of a city, his office a priesthood, and speaks of the election of a bishop, and of the imposition of the hand, whereby the party is *manifested a presbyter*. Pelagius flourished A. D. 405, and thereabouts. In his Commentary on 1 Tim. 3, he says,[3] 'Why did the apostle make no mention of presbyters, but comprehend them under the name of bishops? because they are the second, yea, almost one and the same degree with bishops, as the apostle writes, in the epistle to the Philippians; to the bishops and deacons; when yet in one city there cannot be more bishops than one. And in the Acts of the Apostles, Paul having, in his way to Jerusalem, called the elders of Ephesus, among other things, said, 'take heed unto the flock, in which the Holy Ghost has ordained you bishops.' Besides, on 1 Cor. 1, 'He declares all priests to be the successors of the apostles.'

Severus, of the Sulpician family, was presbyter of Argen, and died A. D. 420. 'Speaking of the military guard,' says Dr. Wilson, directed by the emperor Hadrian to be constantly kept at Jerusalem, he observes, that until that period, 'the church had no priest at Jerusalem, except of the circumcision, and that their first Mark, of Gentile extraction, was made their bishop.' Priests, Levites, altars, sacrifices, and other words proper to Jewish and Pagan worship, were not introduced till after the days of the apostles, into the christian church; and *sacerdos*, here promiscuously used with *episcopus*, at its first introduction, designated only the presbyter, which the occasional insertion *summus*, by this writer, to distinguish the bishop, still viewed as the *primus presbyter*, plainly evinces. 'In the history of his own times, he mentions the fact, that Priscilianus made a layman bishop of Abila. *Priscilianus etiam laicum episcopum in Labinensi*, (*Abilensi apud Hieron*,) *oppido constituit*.'

1) Cassianus Collatione 4, c. 1. See in Natali Alexandro. p. 142.
2) In Dr. Wilson, p. 185.
3) See given in Ayton's Orig. Constit. of the Chr. Ch. p. 571, and Jameson's Fund. p. 176.
4) Prim. Govt. pp. 185, 186.

## § 12. *The testimony of Theodoret, Primasius, Sedulius, the Paulicians, and others.*

Theodoret flourished A. D. 423. In his Commentary on 1 Tim. 3, he says,[1] 'The apostles call a presbyter a bishop, as we showed when we expounded the epistle to the Philippians, and which may be also learned from this place, for after the precepts proper to bishops, he describes the things which belong to deacons. But, as I said, of old they called the same men both bishops and presbyters.' Primasius was contemporary with Theodoret, and reputed to be the disciple of Augustine. In explaining 1 Tim. 3, he asks,[2] 'why the apostle leaps from the duties of bishops to the duties of deacons, without any mention of presbyters?' and answers, 'because bishops and presbyters are the same degree.' Sedulius, also,[3] who lived in the same age, on Titus 1, expressly asserts the identity of bishop and presbyter. He declares, not only that the *titles* are interchangeably applied to the same men, but also that *the office is the same:* many of them being found in the primitive church, in one city, which could not be true of *diocesan bishops*. Again, in the second council of Carthage, A. D. 428, canon 5, it was[4] observed, that until that time some dioceses had been without any bishop at all, when it was determined that these should have none for the future.

The council of Arausicana was held A. D. 441. In the thirtieth canon it is decreed, 'that if any bishop, on account of any infirmity or debility, should lose his powers, or the ability to speak, those things which, ordinarily, are conducted by bishops, he shall permit the presbyters to do, *non sub præsentia sua*,' from which it is plain that all exclusive prelatical assumptions are based only upon ecclesiastical custom.[5]

The fourth council of Carthage was held A. D. 436.[6] In canon 35th it is decreed, that a bishop should not be exercised in the affairs of his household, but wholly give himself to reading, praying, and preaching the word. This council, says Ayton,[7] was held about the year 436. And what is mentioned from it, is an evident discovery that the dignity of the

1) Opera. tom. iv. p. 652. Halæ, 771. Also in Dr. Miller, p. 126.
2) Dr. Miller on Min. p. 126.
3) In Dr. Miller, p. 126.
4) Carauz. Sum. Concil. Carth. 2, canto 5. In Ayton, p. 533.
5) Blondel, in Nat. Alex. p. 143. Binii Concil. tom. ii. p. 692, &c.
6) Binii Concil. tom. i. pp. 726, 729. See in Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 441 – 443, where may be seen Chamier and Salmasius, on it.
7) P. 547.

episcopal office was then reckoned to consist in teaching and preaching, and not in secular power. The same council says, in their third canon, when a presbyter is ordained, the bishop blessing him, and holding his hand on his head, all the presbyters present are also to hold their hands on his head, together with the bishop. Again, in the twenty-third canon, it is expressly determined, that a bishop ought not to hear any cause but in the presence of the clergy. And to give a further view of the remaining equality, that at this time was preserved between bishops and presbyters, it is enacted in the thirty-fourth canon, that if a bishop shall be sitting in any place, the presbyter is not to be allowed to stand. And in the thirty-fifth, let the bishop in the church, in the assembly of the presbyters, have the highest seat; yet, in his house, he must know that the presbyters are his colleagues. Thus, then, presbyters and bishops being colleagues, this must, at once, discover their original equality. 'The council of Aquisgrave,[1] canon 8, decided, that the ordination and consecration of ministers is now reserved to the chief ministry, *solum propter auctoritatem*, only for authority sake, lest that the discipline of the church, being challenged by many, should break the peace of the church.'

It is unnecessary to continue these testimonies. Numerous others have been already adduced, under former heads, and by Blondel, and others.[2] But these are enough, and more than enough, to secure our purpose, which is to demonstrate, that, even during the progress of the hierarchy, the original presbyterianism of the church's polity was not forgotten; that traces of it still continued to exist; that many openly avowed their belief in it, while satisfied with existing arrangements; and that, even when prelatical dignity had been fully established, it was not pretended that it was based upon any certain and positive divine right. It may, however, be important, further to show that these views were not confined to individuals, but extended to large bodies of christians, to adduce the testimony of the Paulicians. About the year A. D. 600, there lived in Samosata, not far from the borders of Armenia and Syria, a man named Constantine. Becoming possessed of a Greek New Testament, he was led, by its careful examination, to reject, among other errors, the dogma

1) Willet's Syn. Pap. p. 277.

2) See Blondeli Apol. and in Nat. Alex. pp. 124, 137, 139, 144, 151. See the testimonies of the fathers, generally, given in Cochet's Remains, p. 110, &c. and 108, &c. Owen's Wks. vol. xx. p. 153, &c. and 132. Pierce's Vind. of Dissenters, part iii. c. 1, p. 63, &c. Henderson's Rev. and Cons'd, p. 364. Plea for Presb. p. 240, &c. Elliot on Rom. vol. i. p. 468, &c.

of three orders of the clergy, and to believe that all religious teachers were 'equal in rank,' and to be 'distinguished from laymen by no rights, prerogatives, or insignia.' In short, he repudiated the whole hierarchical system then established, with all its pernicious and unscriptural doctrines.[1] He, accordingly, began to preach 'primitive christianity,' in the regions of Pontus and Cappadocia, where he found numerous persons ready, with him, to contend, earnestly, for the faith, simplicity, order, and liberty of the gospel. This new sect, which, out of respect for their favorite apostle, were called Paulicians, spread rapidly over Asia Minor. The fiery sword of persecution was unsheathed against them, but out of the blood and ashes of their martyrs, new teachers and converts arose. After enduring a century and a half of persecution, they enjoyed a short respite, in A. D. 802 – 811, only to suffer a more severe and terrible extermination. Flying from destruction, they carried with them, as on the wings of the wind, the seed of immortal truth, which, taking root every where, diffused, as in apostolic days, the truth, as it is in Jesus. Under Michael III, one hundred thousand Paulicians were barbarously slain, to attest the sincerity of his *christian* decree, that they should be either exterminated by fire and sword, or brought back to the Greek church.

In the tenth century, the European Paulicians were recruited by emigrations from their native regions, and by new proselytes. Their villages and castles extended from Thrace, through Macedonia and Epirus, towards the Adriatic. In the eleventh century they were numerous in Lombardy and Isubria, and especially in Milan, and were found, also, in France, Germany, Italy, and other countries, where they were known as the Paterini, Cathari, Puritans, and Albigenses. By the gloomy light of inquisitorial fires, and Romish calumny, false witness, and abuse, we may trace these suffering witnesses for truth and order, even to the period of the reformation, when their light was merged in that full blaze, which burst upon an emancipated church. The testimony of other bodies, such as the Culdees, the Alexandrian church, the Goths, the Irish, and British christians, will be adduced when we come to speak of the Antiquity of Presbyterianism.[2]

1) See Mosheim, B. iii. Cent. ix, part ii. c. 5.

2) See a full exposure of the most guilty and felonious calumnies of their torturers, the Romanists, in Faber's able work on the Vallenses and Albigenses, B. ii. c. 1, &c. See also an interesting sketch in Punchard's Hist. of Congreg. c. iv. p. 79, &c. to which we are indebted. Vaughan's Life of Wickliffe, vol. i. pp. 114 – 127. Blair's Hist. of the Waldenses, vol. i. 176 – 180. Clarke's Hist. of Intolerance, vol. ii. pp. 273 – 289.

# CHAPTER V.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCHOOLMEN, OR FATHERS OF THE LATER AND MIDDLE AGES, TO THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY.

Mr. Palmer, after showing that many of the fathers assert the identity of bishops and presbyters, adds,[1] 'To these may be added the great body of the schoolmen, Hugo Victor, Peter Lombard, Alexander Alensis, Bonaventura, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinus, Scotus, Abulensis, Turrecremata, Cajetan, &c. Many teach that the episcopate is only an extension of the sacerdotal order, such as Durandus, Paludanus, Dominic Soto, &c.' Mr. Sinclair acknowledges the same thing, and that quite in a rage.[2] Bishop Davenant and archbishop Usher,[3] Dr. Bowden,[4] and archdeacon Mason,[5] testify to the same effect.[6]

The canons, says Lombard,[7] determine that two orders only ought, by way of excellency, to be termed sacred, namely, that of the diaconate, and that of the presbyterate, because we read that the primitive church had only these two, and of these alone we have the command of the apostles.'

Isidore Hispalensis, A. D. 596, Etymol. vii. c. 12, copies with approbation the passage already given from Jerome's epistle to Oceanum. Dionysius, A. D. 556, on Phil. 1 : 1,[8] gives the following exposition. 'As Haymo saith, by bishops, presbyters are understood; for many bishops did not preside in one city; neither could the apostle descend from bishops to deacons, passing by the presbyters, except under the name

1) Treatise on the Church, vol. ii. p. 376.
2) Vind. of the Episc. or Apost. Succ. p. 81. Lond. 1839.
3) Judgment of the archbishop of Armagh, pp. 130–134.
4) Wks. on Episc. vol. ii. p. 173.
5) Def. of the Min. of the Ref. Ch. in Bernard's Usher, as above.
6) Determinationes Quæst. 42 in Comm. on Col. vol. i. p. 53.
7) Lib. 4. dist. 24, in Jameson's Sum of the Episc. Cont. p. 239.
8) Jameson's Sum, pp. 240, 241.

of bishops he understood presbyters. Hence it is usually said that, in the primitive church, bishops were not distinguished from priests or presbyters.' 'And on 1 Tim. 3, some, (saith he,) affirm, probably, that here, under the name of bishop, priest or presbyter is understood: for the discourse of deacons is presently subjoined.' Amalarius, archbishop of Treves, A. D. 810,[1] exactly copies after Hilary and Jerome, and clearly enough intimates that the ordination of presbyters and bishops were originally the same, and adopts the words of Jerome, in his epistle to Evagrius. He is most express, that as the church increased, so she multiplied in ecclesiastical offices: and this he borrows from Hilary, whom he reckoned to have been Ambrose, on the epistles to Timothy. In a word, when he comes to explain by what custom bishops came to be appointed, he adopts the words of Jerome on the epistle to Titus. The council of Aix La Chapelle, about A. D. 816,[2] owns the original identity of bishops and presbyters, and expressly declares, that the ordination of the clergy was reserved to the high priest, only for the maintenance of his dignity. Now if we shall look back to the year 619, we shall find the second council of Seville, in Spain, declaring themselves in these words, 'Albeit there are very many dispensations of the mysteries common to the presbyters and bishops; yet, let them, (the presbyters,) know, that there are some things forbidden them by the old law, and others by modern and ecclesiastical rules, such as the ordination of presbyters, &c. This is the reading of the canon, according to Caranza; but it is otherwise rendered by others, namely, 'Although there are many functions of the ministry common to the presbyters, with the bishops; yet, by the modern ecclesiastical rules, there are some functions denied to them, such as the consecration of presbyters, deacons, and virgins.' Let us ascend yet a little higher, to the year 600, and we shall have the bishop of Seville agreeing with the council held in that place, while he asserts, that, to these, (presbyters,) as well as to the bishops, is committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God: they are set over the churches of Christ, and in the mingling the body and blood of Christ, they are alike with the bishops, and in the office of preaching to the people; only, for the greater honor of the bishop, and preventing schisms, the power of ordination was restricted to him.'

Rabanus Maurus, bishop of Mentz, who flourished in

1) Apol. p. 81; Ayton, pp. 572, 573.

2) Caranz. Sum. Concil. Hispal. can. 7. p. 260; in Ayton, 549.

A. D. 847, says,[1] 'With the ancients, bishops and presbyters were the same, because the first was a name of honor, and the latter of age or experience. These words, as is observed by the judicious Blondel, are borrowed from Isodore, bishop of Seville; and he gives some other passages from him to the same purpose, which, as he observes, are partly borrowed from Hilary.' Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria, about 930, says, 'The evangelist Mark appointed twelve presbyters to remain with the patriarch, so that, when that office should become vacant, they might choose one of the twelve *presbyters*, upon whom the eleven should lay their hands and bless him, and create him a patriarch. Nor did this institution cease down even to the time of Alexander, patriarch of Alexandria. He decreed that, upon the death of the patriarch, the *bishops* should assemble and appoint a patriarch.' Bernaldus Constantiensis, about 1088, the most zealous defender of Gregory VII, after citing Jerome, in his De Presbyterorum Officio. Tract., continues, 'Inasmuch, therefore, as *bishops* and *presbyters* were anciently the same, they had, without doubt, the same power to loose and to bind, and other things which are now the prerogative of the bishop.' Even pope Urban II, 1091, says, 'We regard deacons and presbyters as belonging to the sacred order. If, indeed, these are the only orders which the primitive church is understood to have had, for these we have apostolic authority.' Conc. Benevent. can. 1. Gratian advances similar views, in Dist. lx. Gratian was the father of the canonists, another squadron of the papal and prelatical champions, whose great effort it has been to harmonize and reconcile the various and contradictory papal canons and decrees. This work was first accomplished by Gratian. This author says,[2] 'We call the sacred orders the diaconate and presbyterate; these only the primitive church is said to have had.'

Joannes Seneca, in his gloss on the canon law, speaks to the same effect.[3] 'They say, indeed, that, in the first primitive church, the office of bishops and priests, and their names, were common; but in the second primitive church, both names and offices began to be distinguished.' From these two noted writers among the Romans, it is easy to perceive, that there was a time when there was a first primitive church, in which the presbyters acted in common, and had the sole power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and that both the office

1) Blondel, Apol. p. 81; Ayton's Constit. of Ch. p. 573.

2) See in Ayton, p. 502, and dist. 95. c. 5. 93. c. 21. and 21. c. 1.

3) Dist. 95. c. in ibid.

and names of bishops and presbyters were common.' Atto, bishop of Verceil, flourished A. D. 950. In his treatise on the judgments of bishops,[1] he thinks the church founded on the confession of the apostolic faith: and that she subsists by the faith and love of Jesus, by receiving the sacraments, and by observing the precepts of our Saviour.' 'He conceives that the order of bishops and that of presbyters, were the same in the time of the apostle Paul: that the people have right to a share in the election of bishops; that the laity can judge of the behavior of bishops; and that spiritual guides are not to be elected because of noble blood, but for their faith and charity.'

The canon law itself contains the following decree, 'Bishops ought to know that they are presbyters, not lords, neither ought they to lord it over the clergy. The bishop, when sitting, ought not to permit presbyters to stand. Bishops ought to know that they are greater than presbyters, rather by custom than by any dispensation.'[2] Lombard, the great father of the schoolmen, A. D. 1164, says,[3] 'Having briefly spoken to the seven degrees of the church, we have insinuated what should belong to every one: and all of them are spiritual and sacred: notwithstanding the canons determine, that only two orders ought to be termed sacred by way of eminency, namely, that of the diaconate, and that of the presbyterate, because we read that the primitive church had only these two; and of these alone we have the command of the apostle; for the apostles did ordain bishops and presbyters in every city.'

Duns Scotus, who flourished A. D. 1300, and commented on Lombard, authenticated, as we have seen, his views. Armachanus, or properly Richard Fitz Ralph,[4] who was archbishop of Armagh, in 1347, says,[5] 'a bishop, in such things, hath no more in respect of his order, than every single priest: although the church hath appointed that such things should be executed by those men whom we call bishops.' 'There is not found, in the evangelical or apostolical scripture, any difference between bishops and simple priests, called presbyters. Ib. lib. xi. ix. Arm. c. 5.' In another work[6] he gives the strongest possible testimony. In this he avers, that

1) See in Blair's Hist. of the Waldenses, vol. i. pp. 158, 161.

2) The original is found in Warburton's Wks. vol. vii. p. 150.

3) Ayton, 577, from lib. iv. dist. 24; and Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 29.

4) See Stuart's Hist. of Armagh, p. 185, &c.

5) Div. Right of the Min. part ii. p. 133.

6) De Questionibus Armenorum, c. 1 – 6. in Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, 2, 325, 326.

these states and degrees of patriarch, archbishop, bishop, &c., were invented only out of the devotion of men, not instituted by Christ and his apostles. That no prelate of the church, how great soever, hath any greater degree of the power of order, than a simple priest. In the fourth chapter, he proves that the power of confirmation and imposition of hands, that the Holy Ghost may be given thereby, appertains to the jurisdiction of the presbytery, which he manifesteth by Acts, 7: 14; 1 Tim. 4, and by the practice of the primitive church after the apostles' time. In the fourth and fifth chapters, he demonstrates that priests are called bishops by the apostle. Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3; Titus, 1; and Acts, 20: 28; and that they succeed the apostles in order. In the sixth chapter, he proves that all priests and bishops are equal as to the power of order; and in the fourth chapter, he punctually determines that there is no distinction found in the evangelical or apostolical scriptures, between bishops and simple priests, called presbyters; whence it follows, that in all of them there is one and equal power by reason of order; and that, for aught he can find, the apostle Paul doth not, in any of his epistles, distinguish between the order of presbyters (that is, of apostles,) and bishops. That every one who hath the cure of others, is a bishop. Which the name of a bishop importeth and manifesteth. For a bishop is nothing else but a superintendent, or watchman; from whence it is evident that, besides the power of order, he hath nothing but a cure.'

Gerson, A. D. 1392, and styled 'doctor christianismus,' declares,[1] 'Above priesthood there is no superior order; no, not the function of a bishop or archbishop.' Aureolus has a very notable passage,[2] 'Every form, inasmuch as it is in act, hath power to communicate itself in the same kind; therefore, every priest hath power to celebrate orders. Why, then, do they not celebrate them? Because their power is hindered by the decree of the church. Whereupon, when a bishop is made, there is not given unto him any new power, but, the former power being hindered, is set at liberty; as a man, when the act of reason is hindered, and the impediment is removed, there is not given unto him a new soul. From all these things, it appears that presbyters have an intrinsical power to ordain presbyters.' 'Michael Casenas, the head of the Minorites, who flourished before the year 1399, maintained,[3]

1) Div. Right of the Min. part ii. p. 133. See the whole passage given, at p. 140 of Div. Right of the Min. part 2.

2) Lib. iv. q. 24, act 2, in ibid.

3) Ayton, p. 577.

that all priests, of whatever degree, were of equal power, authority, and jurisdiction, by the institution of Christ.'

Ocham, a great schoolman, says,[1] 'that, by Christ's institution, all priests, of whatsoever degree, are of equal authority, power, and jurisdiction. Catal. Test. Verit. Richardus de Media Villa in 4 Sent. distinct. 24, q. 2, saith, that episcopacy is to be called, not an order, which is a sacrament, but rather a certain dignity of an order. Concil. Colon. Euchirid. Christ. Religion, Paris edit. An. 1558. p. 169 of holy orders, saith, bishops and presbyters were the same order in the primitive church, as all the epistles of Peter and Paul, and Jerome also, and almost all the fathers, witness.' Antony Beccadelli, surnamed Panormitan, from his native country, A. D. 1400, says,[2] 'formerly, presbyters governed the church in common, and ordained priests, and equally conferred all the sacraments.'

We might here repeat the testimonies already adduced, in reference to continuance and powers of the chorepiscopi.[3] Also, all the testimonies adduced under the head of ordination.[4] Nicholas Tudeschus, archbishop of Panorma, about A. D. 1428, says, 'Formerly *presbyters* governed the church in common, and ordained the clergy, *sacerdotes*.' Ed. Lugd. 1547, fol. 112 b. It is perhaps still more remarkable, that even the papal canonist, Jo. Paul Launcelot, A. D. 1570, introduces the passage of Jerome, without any attempt to refute it.

1) Corbet's Remains, p. 110.

2) Lib. i. decret. de consult, c. 4, in Div. Right of Min. p. 129; and again at pp. 139, 140, more fully.

3) See B. i. ch. x. § 1, and Div. Right of Min. pp. 135–138.

4) See B. i. ch. x. and ibid, pp. 139–142.

# CHAPTER VI.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE ROMISH, GREEK, AND SYRIAN CHURCHES, IN FAVOR OF THE CLAIMS OF PRESBYTERY.

It is our purpose, at this time, only to refer to those churches which have been supposed to be most hierarchical, and opposed to the system of presbytery, reserving the testimony of others, for our chapter on the antiquity of presbyterianism. *Fas est ab hoste doceri*, and the testimony of those who practically adopt the system of prelacy, to the original identity of the orders of bishops and presbyters, must be allowed to have great weight with all who wish to preserve the pure order and doctrine of the apostles.

We will first inquire, therefore, what is the testimony given on this subject, by the Romish church. There are three opinions prevalent in this church. Some think that the episcopate is a distinct order from the presbyterate. Some believe that both these orders are one *generically*, but two *specifically*, or that they constitute but one order and two degrees. But the prevailing theory is that of those who believe that the episcopate is not a distinct order, but the extension of the order of the presbyterate, by a greater latitude of jurisdiction.[1] 'To this class belong the master of the sentences, Bonaventura, Thomas Aquinas, Pope Cornelius, Gregory the Great, Alcuin, &c. The council of Trent is with this class of divines, as we may gather from the second canon of the twenty-third session, which makes the priesthood the principal order, and the episcopate only a branch of it. The catechism, too, says, respecting orders, that its highest degree is the priesthood.'

This, indeed, must be the case, for as these were the sentiments of so many fathers, of the great body of the schoolmen, and of the canonists, and as these constitute the exponents of

1) Elliott on Roman. i. pp. 451, 452, 457, 458.

Romish doctrines, the Romish church must be regarded as holding that there is but one general order of the priesthood, and different degrees of dignity and power. 'Popery and prelacy,' says Mr. Sinclair,[1] 'so far from being necessarily connected with one another, are diametrically opposed. No sooner was the supremacy of the pope acknowledged, than encroachments were made on episcopal jurisdiction. Various districts and entire corporations of ecclesiastics were withdrawn from diocesan control. More power was given, in many instances, to mere priests and deacons, (under the name of cardinals and legates,) than to any bishop but the Roman pontiff. Inferior church officers, invested with the uncanonical authority, were frequently empowered to suspend, and even to deprive, their superiors. The pope, it was affirmed, might grant commissions authorizing the lower ranks of the clergy to confer upon others the order or degree held by themselves: so that a priest was licensed to ordain priests, and a deacon to ordain deacons; on which commissions we may make this passing remark, that they form the earliest and only precedent, before the days of protestantism, for presbyterian or diaconal ordination.'

If, therefore, we look to the practice of the Romish church, we must certainly conclude that the order of the episcopate is not regarded as distinct, or as of divine right.[2] In addition to what has been stated, it is also a fact, that during the greater part of the last century, Romish bishops were consecrated in England and Ireland, by a single bishop, assisted by two priests. It seems, also, that the Roman pontiffs had no difficulty in giving permission to such ordinations in foreign missions.[3] And yet, this is contrary to the canons of the universal church, which would conclude such ordinations invalid.[4] They must, therefore, depend entirely on the dispensing power of the pope, and this implies that the laws dispensed with depend upon ecclesiastical custom, which the pope may set aside, and not upon divine institution, which even the pope, in theory, is not believed to be able to alter or subvert, since, as Bellarmine teaches, *in jure divino Papa non potest dispensare.*[6]

1) Vind. of Episc. or Ap. Succ. pp. 80, 81. See also Broughton's Eccl. Dict. vol. i. p. 160. Oxd. Tr. vol. iii. p. 138, where is quoted archbishop Braimhall. Laud. on the Lit. and Episc. p. 347.

2) See Burnet's Vind. of the Ch. of Scotland, pp. 172, 173.

3 Faber on Transubstantiation, pp. 121 and 123, and Palmer's Episc. Vind. against Dr. Wiseman, p. 249.

4) Palmer, ibid. p. 248, &c. Nat. Alex. Corpus Juris. Canonici. dist. lxiv. p. 194, Decret. part i.

6) Lib. ii. de Concil. c. 18, and De Matrim. c. ii, and see Aureolus to the same effect, in Div. Right of Min. p. 142.

Neither is the council of Trent to be regarded as contradicting this opinion. 'The divines in the council of Trent who were in the pope's interest, argued against the position, that bishops had any other authority whatever, than that derived from the pope, by using 'those same arguments against the divine right of episcopacy, which from them, and the popish canonists and schoolmen, have been licked up by presbyterians and others.'[1] No subject occasioned more fierce and protracted debates in the council of Trent, than that of the divine right of the order of bishops, as may be fully seen in the histories of that body.[2] That the final decree, which was a compromise between the opposing parties, favors the opinion that the first and second orders of the ministry, that is, bishops and presbyters, are identical in order, is allowed even by the semi-popish Mr. Palmer, who gives as his reason, that[3] 'it does not reckon the episcopate as a distinct order from the priesthood, though it denounces anathema against those who deny that there is a hierarchy, divinely instituted, consisting of bishops, presbyters, and ministers.' In the catechism, published by authority of this council and pope Pius V, and embodying their views, this doctrine is most unequivocally advanced. 'These,' it says,[4] after enumerating the priestly functions, 'these are the proper and special functions of the priestly order; which order, THOUGH IT BE BUT ONE, yet it has different degrees of dignity and power. The first is of those who are simply called priests, whose functions have hitherto been declared. The second is of bishops, who are placed over their several bishoprics, to govern, not only the other ministers of the church, but the faithful people, also; and, with the utmost vigilance and care, to take regard of their salvation.' Here, we are expressly taught, that there is but one order of the ministry, while the degree of bishops is proved only by those passages which are now *universally* allowed to refer only to presbyters. The catechism, then goes on to enumerate archbishops and patriarchs, as the third and fourth degrees of this order; and since it admitted, with equal universality, that these are, *in order*, one and the same with bishops, bishops must also be, in order, one and the same with presbyters. And hence,

1) Leslie's Letter on Episcop. in Scholar Armed. vol. i. p. 75.

2) Paolo's Hist. of the Council of Trent, pp. 160, 217, 316, 552, 557, 574, 590–598, 677, 687. Mendham's Hist. of Council of Trent, pp. 249–253, 256. Cramp's Text Book of Popery, p. 297, and Notes, Eng. ed.

3) Treatise on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 376.

4) Sect. xlviii. p. 308, Lond. 1687.

in the note inserted in the new body of the canon law,[1] it is said, 'there has been always a difference, and still is, between bishops and presbyters, in respect of government, preëminence, and sacraments, but the name and title is common to both.'

This opinion, even though infallibly determined, we do not affirm to be universally received, in the Romish church, but only, that it is the established and general doctrine, and that of many of her ablest divines. Cassander holds this language,[2] 'if episcopacy be an order, divines and canonists do not agree. BUT ALL AGREE THAT, IN THE APOSTLES' AGE, THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BISHOP AND PRESBYTER, but afterwards, for order's sake, and that schism might be shunned, the bishop was set over the presbyter, to whom, alone, the power of ordination was committed. It is certain, also, that the presbyterate and diaconate, are THE ONLY SACRED ORDERS, which we read to have been in the primitive church, which pope Urban witnesseth, and Chrysostom and Ambrose observed.' Estius, in his commentary on Lombard's distinctions, allows, also, that the divine right of episcopacy cannot be clearly proved from scripture.[3] Cardinal Cajetan, on Acts 20: 28, says,[4] that 'the apostle calls the same persons bishops, who had been named presbyters, verse 17th. For,' saith the cardinal, 'bishop is the name of an office: which office, the apostle subjoins in these words, to rule the flock of God.' Erasmus, on 1 Tim. 4: 14, says,[5] that, 'anciently, there was no difference between presbyter or priest, and bishop, as Jerome witnesses.' 'Among all christians,' says Baxter,[6] 'the papists are the highest prelatists; and among all papists the Jesuits; and among all the Jesuits Petavius, who hath written against Salmasius, &c., on this subject.' Petavius, Dissert. Ecclesiast. de Episcop. dignit. jurisd. p. 22, concludeth his first chapter, in which he had cited the chiefest of the fathers. 'Hitherto, it is proved by the authority of the ancients, that in the first times, not only the names but the orders of presbyters and bishops did concur into the same persons.' Patavius, also, fully proves, that the ancient bishop was a pastor of one communion.[7] Page 24th. 'I think that

1) Dr. Reynolds's Letter to Sir Fr. Knolly's, in Boyse's Anct. Chr. p. 17.

2) Consult art. 14, in Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 295, Ayton, p. 577.

3) Lib. iv. dist. xxiv. § 25.

4) Jameson's Sum of Episc. Contr. 241.

5) Ibid, p. 242.

6) Baxter on Episcop. part ii. pp. 13, 14.

7) Baxter, ibid, pp 14, 15, where will be found lengthened quotations from him.

either all or most of the presbyters were so ordained, as that they obtained both the degree of bishop and of presbyter.' Where he proceedeth to show, that he thinks this was done that there might be a store of bishops prepared for all countries, page 25. He holds that there were many bishops in one church, as in that of Ephesus, which he taketh for a particular church, and not a province.'

The testimony thus abundantly offered by the Romish church, in favor of presbytery, may also be found in the Greek church. To this church belong all those fathers whose voice has already been heard, connected with that portion of the world falling within the limits of the Greek church. In addition to the weight of their testimony, we have a powerful repudiation of prelatical claims, and attestation to the original powers and functions of presbyters, in the *existing customs* of this church. According to the Romish and the Anglican hierarchy, there is no function more preëminently episcopal, or appropriated to the bishop, than that of confirmation, so that it would be as outrageous, and as worthy of being accursed, to impute to presbyters this function, as that of ordination itself.[1] Now in the Greek church, presbyters are allowed to confirm; not only so, but, what is still more awful, even to consecrate the chrism; and, what crowns the mystery of this iniquity, this practice is sustained by an appeal to the apostolical constitutions!![2] A proof positive, that, in the judgment of this church, the whole arrangement of the functions of these two orders depends upon no original difference, but altogether upon ecclesiastical law.

To this we may add the testimony of Platon, archbishop of Moscow, who, in his Summary of Christian Divinity, teaches, that 'the governors of the churches consist of pastors and spiritual teachers, according to the doctrine of Paul, Eph. 4: 11, 12. Of pastors some are greater, such as bishops; and others are lesser, such as presbyters or ministers.' Both, however, are pastors, who are governors of the churches.[3] Nilus, also, archbishop of the Greek church, says,[4] 'nay, every priest is, by this reason, a successor of the apostles, of whom, by tradition, they have received the priesthood,' &c. To these we may add, that 'Zaga Zabo, an Ethiopic bishop, names, says Dr. Willet,[5] priests and deacons and subdea-

1) Potter on Ch. Govt. Cramp's Text Book of Popery, p. 124, Eng. ed.

2) Riddle's Chr. Antiq. p. 498, Apost. Const. l. iii. c. 16, 17, and iv. c. 43.

3) Pinkerton's Transl. Edinb. 1814, p. 167, § 28.

4) Lib. ii. de primat. in Willet, Syn. p. 168.

5) Synopsis Papismi. Fol. p. 268, from Damianus de Morib. Ethiop.

cons, and addeth no more, in his confession of the Ethiopic faith.

Another important branch of the church of Christ is the Syrian, visited by Dr. Buchanan, and which may fairly lay claim to be one of the most ancient and interesting of all existing christian communities. 'Some circumstances,'[1] says Dr. Kerr, in his report on these churches, 'may be collected from undoubted authority, by which it may be inferred, that the St. Thomè christians have been for nearly fifteen centuries established in India. For we find in ecclesiastical history, that at the first council of Nice, in the year 325, a bishop from India was amongst the number composing that memorable synod.'

That, in their present form, the Syrian christians are chargeable with much corruption, and numerous errors, among which we class their hierarchical forms, is lamented by bishop Wilson.[2] Their *existing* testimony, therefore, is of no force against us, since it can be made clear, that, originally, that is, in the second century, they had no knowledge of three orders of the ministry, or of any others besides those of bishops and deacons. For, the oldest Syriac version of the New Testament, commonly called the Peshito, probably made early in the second century, and bearing a very high character for faithfulness, and accuracy, uniformly renders the word *επισκοπος*, as it occurs in Acts 20: 17, 28; in 1 Peter 5: 1, 2, 'elder,' and the word *επισκοπου*, in 1 Tim. 3: 1, &c., the 'office of an elder.' On this fact, the learned John David Michaelis, in his 'Introduction to the New Testament,' thus remarks: 'we know that the distinction between bishops and elders was introduced into the christian church in a very early age: yet the distinction was unknown to the Syrian translator.' In reference to this statement, Dr. Herbert Marsh, afterwards bishop of Peterborough, and a zealous high-churchman, in his 'Notes' on Michaelis's work, makes the following observation: 'this proves that the Syriac translator understood his original; and that he made a proper distinction between the language of the primitive and the hierarchical church.' This fact will appear to be incontrovertibly strong, when it is borne in mind, that this version had adopted the term, *επισκοπος*, or bishop of the Greeks, and that the word elder,

1) Bishop Burgess's Tracts on the Anct. Brit. Ch. p. 320. See also Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 197, who thinks the gospel was carried to India in the fourth century.

2) See his Acct. of them in Buchanan's Researches, as Pub. by Soc. for Prom. Pop. Instruct. Lond. 1840, p. 84.

that is, presbyter, was employed, *instead of that term*, not from any necessity, but from the two being in the mind of the translator identical.[1]

On this subject, Dr. Buchanan also remarks:[2] 'it is proper to state, for the satisfaction of those who may differ in opinion with the venerable bishop, that, in the Syriac translation of the New Testament, there is no proper word for bishop, other than *kasheesha*. The word *kasheesha* and *shumshana* or properly *meshumshana*, are the two terms for the two orders of bishop and deacon, in the third chapter of 1st Timothy. The terms episcopos and methropolita have been introduced into the Syrian church from the Greek. The bishop seemed to be more surprised at the striking out of the sacred order of deacon, than at not finding the order of a superintending priest or bishop. The same thing is true respecting other oriental churches, as for instance the Nestorians, who also borrow from the Greeks the term *episcopos*.[3] This is the more remarkable, when we remember, that the Syriac language was spoken by our Lord himself, and extensively used in his days, throughout Palestine. So that if any prelatic office had then existed, or as late as the date of the Syriac version, some Syriac title for it would have been undoubtedly found.

Up to the year 1599, these Syrian christians had remained independent of Rome, even after the arrival of the Portuguese among them. At this time, Menezes, archbishop of Goa, succeeded in enforcing an apparent submission to the church of Rome. For this purpose, a synod was called, at Diamper, in June 1599, when one hundred and fifty of the Syrian clergy appeared, the acts and decrees of which were published at Conimbra, in 1606.[4] In his opening speech, the archbishop addresses only 'the venerable priests and the representatives and procurators of the people,'[5] that is, the lay elders, and the deacons. So, also, the second decree addresses itself only to 'priests, deacons, and sub-deacons.'[6] While among the books condemned by the synod,[7] is 'also the book of orders;' on the ground that it says, that 'the form and not the

1) See Dr. Bennet's Theology of the Early Christ. p. 240.

2) Researches, as above, p. 80, note.

3) Dr. Grant's Nestorians, p. 105, and Dr. Perkins's Residence in Persia, p. 19.

4) They form quite a volume — embracing an entire and lengthened Confession of Faith and Discipline, and may be seen in Hough's Hist. of Christ. in India, vol. ii. Appendix, pp. 511 – 688.

5) Ibid, p. 515.

6) P. 525.

7) Sess. iii. Dec. xv. p. 547.

matter is necessary to orders; and the forms therein are likewise erroneous; THAT THERE ARE ONLY TWO ORDERS, the DIACONATE AND PRIESTHOOD.' From this it is manifest, that, up to 1599, the only orders known among these ancient christians were those of presbyters and deacons, with the representatives of the people. These lay elders, or representatives of the people, are repeatedly mentioned, and their names given, by Buchanan.[1] For, after the expulsion of the Portuguese, these churches shook off the yoke of Rome, though they could not free themselves from many erroneous impressions and views. The conduct of Dr. Buchanan, and of his episcopal editors, ever since, in reference to this testimony, is worthy of most severe condemnation. In three editions of his Researches, which we have before us, the Syrian churches are represented as having[2] 'maintained the order and discipline of a regular church under episcopal jurisdiction: and that, for thirteen hundred years past, they had enjoyed a succession of bishops, appointed by the patriarch of Antioch.' And as having been accused at the synod of Diamper, of 'having no other orders or names of dignity, in the church, *than bishop, priest, and deacon.*' Such was the original form in which Dr. Buchanan's account of these churches was published. In a subsequent edition, however, he acknowledged that he had actually interpolated the record, and that on referring to the decrees of the synod he had found them accused of having only two orders, 'the diaconate and the priesthood.'[3] And yet, notwithstanding the unquestionable error of the original statement, and Dr. Buchanan's subsequent retraction, prelatists are still found ready to propagate this erroneous statement, for the advancement of their cause, and that too, under cover of societies for '*the promotion of popular instruction.*'[4]

As to the assertion, that the Syrian churches[5] were ruled by 'bishops' and 'prelates,' made on the ground of their having had a metropolitan, we may observe that they had not bishops or prelates, but only one; speaking of whose title, Buchanan acknowledges, that *he* was 'not propely called

1) See Researches, p. 25, as above, and pp. 58, 61, Washbourne's ed. 1840, Lond. See also Pearson's Life of Buchanan, in which there is much new matter.

2) Ed. as above, p. 74.

3) Lond. 1819, see Plea for Presbytery, p. 346.

4) The edition issued by this Society in 1840, undertakes to deliver an abusive and calumnious lecture to its readers, against the Ch. of Scotland, which is, we are gravely informed by this *enlightened* society, 'the only national church in the world in which the scriptures are not read.'!!! p. 78. We hope the editors of the works of this Society will receive its intended benefits before again attempting their editorial functions, and be put to school.

5) Plea for Presbytery, p. 347.

bishop, but *metropolitan.* He does not say what were the peculiar powers or functions of this individual, nor do we know whether the original title would be best translated by metropolitan or moderator; but from his acknowledged interpolation of their document, we know under what a strong prelatical bias the translation was made; and we know also, that when Gilly, another churchman, speaks of the *moderator* of the Waldenses, he takes the liberty of calling him 'the *primate* of their church.' That, up to the year 1599, the president of the Syrian churches could only have been in the rank of moderator, and not in that of prelate, is proved by that decree, already quoted, in which it is stated, that up to that time, they had 'only two orders, diaconate and priesthood.' But, even though it could be shown, that, notwithstanding this decree, they had *now* an office something resembling a prelate, we would not be much surprised, as Buchanan tells us, they have some ceremonies nearly allied to those of the Greek church, and the person, whom he improperly calls bishop, acknowledged, 'that some customs *had been introduced during their decline, in the latter centuries*, which had no necessary connection with the constitution of their church.' Thus easily are these Syrian prelates, and all arguments drawn from them, blown away, like chaff before the wind, and their testimony, as an original branch of the church of Christ, shown to be in favor of presbytery.

# CHAPTER VII.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES, INCLUDING THE ENGLISH, TO THE CLAIM OF PRESBYTERY TO THE TRUE APOSTOLICAL OR MINISTERIAL SUCCESSION.

Next to the apostolic age in purity, piety, and importance, is the age of the reformation; and next to the apostles in rank, authority, and wisdom, do we place those mighty minds, which, under the blessing of God, restored the liberty of the world. 'Perhaps,' says bishop Van Mildert,[1] 'we shall search in vain, either in ancient or modern history, for examples of men more justly entitled to the praise of splendid talents, sound learning, and genuine piety.'

The testimony of such men upon the question before us, we must believe to be second only to that of the word of God. That any considerable portion of them should agree in supporting our views, is a matter of *great* encouragement and praise. But how much more is this the case, if, upon looking back to the era of the reformation, we observe, to use the words of Dr. Hawkins,[2] 'the whole of western christendom engaged in one momentous discussion concerning the first principles of faith and worship; vast powers, and vast erudition, the piety and intrepidity of martyrs, all brought to bear upon the great truths of the gospel, their import, definition, and proof; and the result of those awful discussions, in every church, the solemn and repeatedly renewed asseveration of the truth of the great doctrines' of presbyterianism.

Now that such was the case, we are prepared to contend. We affirm, that ALL the reformers who broke loose from the fetters of the Romish hierarchy and authoritative tradition; who sought their faith in the pure and unadulterated word of God; and who framed their churches according to the pattern showed to them in the mount; were unanimously guided by

1) Boyle, Lect vol. i. p. 288. 2) Bampton Lectures, p. 117.

a superhuman power to the doctrine of ministerial parity, and, in *all essential points*, to the system of presbyterianism. This, we think, can be made to appear from their public standards, from their public practice, and from their publicly expressed opinions.

Let us be understood. We do not assert that *every* individual, who may be enrolled among the reformers, was thus explicit in testifying to these principles; nor that they who did so were uniformly consistent in their views and expressions; nor that all the reformed churches settled down into that *entire* system of ecclesiastical arrangements, which now characterizes what is *peculiarly* called the presbyterian church. Individuals may be found cherishing their ancient prejudices. These prejudices will be found clinging to others, who had become sensible of their falsity. An undue depreciation of the question of external government and order, led others to countenance prelatical orders as 'tolerable fooleries.' While in the minutiæ of ecclesiastical discipline all agreed to differ, and, amid their varying customs, to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

We are aware, that prelatists are found ready to hazard an opposite assertion, and, by forged letters,[1] by garbled extracts, by disjointed expressions, by misinterpreted passages, by tortured phrases, and the betrayed kindness of individuals, to make a show of evidence against us. Nor do we hope that the time will speedily come, when such bold assertion, and parade of words, addressed to willing ears, and to minds seduced by fashion, form, and show, will cease to make impression, or to gain the applause of victory. But, sure we are, that every candid and impartial inquirer will be forced to admit, that on the subject of church government the reformers are with presbyterians, and against prelatists.

In offering this testimony, we shall, for the sake of order, first produce that of the continental, and, secondly, that of the Anglican reformers, and shall divide the former into that of the Lutherans and the Calvinists. The precursors of the reformation shall be heard at another stage of our argument, when it will appear that they were as wonderfully united in their ecclesiastical as in their doctrinal views.

1) In the year 1559 appeared a pamphlet, with the names of Luther and Melancthon, datum in Germania mense mart, &c. which retracted former statements, and made declarations in favor of prelacy. It was refuted by Luther and Melancthon. This was thought to have influenced Henry VIII, in opposing the reform views. See Hoffman's Anglo-Prussian Bishopric, p. 20. See five other examples exposed by Dr. McCrie, in Miscell. Wks. pp. 183–185.

Lutheranism is the established or prevailing form of the protestant faith in Saxony, Prussia, Wirtemberg, Hanover, Northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The views of this immense body, on the subject before us, must be sought in their standards.

Without adducing all that might be brought from the Augustan Confession, or the defence of that Confession,[1] we will refer to the Articles of Smalkald, composed by Luther, subscribed by Melancthon, Jonas, Bugenhagius, Myconius, and received by the protestants of the city, from which they are entitled. It is here declared, 'it is clear, even from the confession of our adversaries, that this power, (to wit, of preaching, dispensing the sacraments, excommunication, and absolution,) is common to all that are set over the churches, whether they be called pastors, presbyters, or bishops. Wherefore Jerome plainly affirms, that there is no difference between a bishop and a presbyter: but that every pastor is a bishop,' &c. Similar views will be found in 'A Syllabus of Controverted Points, drawn out of the received Creeds and Confessions;' in the Confessions of Saxony, drawn up in 1551, by Melancthon, and subscribed by all the Saxon churches; in the Confessions of Wirtemberg, drawn up in 1552, and presented to the Council of Trent. The testimony of Luther may be seen at great length, and in the most full and explicit language, and derived from all his works, in the able work of Dr. Miller.[2] These testimonies are written out before us, but are withdrawn on account of the increasing size of our volume.

It is, therefore, unnecessary to dwell upon the testimony of individuals, after such clear and manifest evidence from the confessions, to which they were attached: nor to reply to the vain objections, founded upon isolated expressions of particular men. Those who wish to see these testimonies more at large, may consult the works referred to.[3]

The doctrine and discipline of the reformed communions, as modelled by Calvin, have been received by the protestant churches of Switzerland, Holland, France, and Scotland, the Palatinate in Germany, the republic of Bremen, the Belgic provinces, Prussia, and the churches of Nassau, Hanau,

1) See Dr. Miller on the Min. part ii. p. 372.

2) On the Ministry, 2d ed. pp. 367 – 370.

3) Dr. Miller on the Min. 2d ed. Phil. 1830, part i. l. 6, and part ii. letter 351; Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, pp. 89 – 97; Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 443, 444; Boyse's Anct. Christ p. 281, &c.; Henderson's Rev. and Consideration, pp. 182 – 185; Welles's Vind. of Presb. Ordination, p. 149, &c.; Ayton's Constit. of the Ch. § 10, Append.

Isenburgh, Anhalt, and others.[1] The sentiments of this immense body, which has continued to diffuse itself through England, Ireland, America, and various portions of the globe, must also be sought definitively in their confessions of faith.

The confession of France, first presented to Francis II, in 1559, and adopted by all the churches of that kingdom, at their first national synod, held at Paris in that year, is most thoroughly presbyterian, and may be taken as a specimen of the whole. In Arts. twenty-ninth and thirtieth, it is decreed,[2] 'We believe that this true church ought to be governed by that discipline which our Lord Jesus hath established; so that there should be in the church pastors, elders, and deacons, that the pure doctrine may have its course, and vices may be reformed and suppressed, that the poor and other afflicted persons may be succored in their necessities, and that in the name of God there may be holy assemblies, in which both great and small may be edified. We believe, that all true pastors, in whatever places they may be disposed, have all the same authority, and equal power among themselves, under Jesus Christ the only head, the only sovereign, and only universal bishop; and that, therefore, it is unlawful for any church to challenge unto itself dominion or sovereignty over another, however it is requisite that all care should be taken for the keeping up of mutual concord and brotherly love.'

It is true, that the French Huguenot churches, like the early Scottish church, had superintendents for general consultation as to the government of the church; 'a president, in each colloquy (or classis) or synod shall be chosen, with a common consent, to preside in the colloquy or synod, and to do every thing that belongs to it; and the said office shall *end* with each colloquy or synod and council.'[3] And, in order still further to prevent any misunderstanding of the term, it was determined,[4] 'that the word superintendent in the two and thirtieth article, is not to be understood of any superiority of one pastor above another, but only in general of such as have office and charge in the church.' Against this, king James of England sent a remonstrance,[5] but without leading to any alteration.[6] Similar, and most thoroughgoing presbyterian sentiments, will be found expressed in the

1) Conder's Analytic View of all Relig. pp. 225, 226.
2) Quick's Synodicon Gall. Ref. fol. 1, p. 13.
3) See Laval's History of the Reformation in France, vol. i. p. 118.
4) Quick, ibid, vol. i. p. 227, § 6.
5) Laval, Hist. vol. v. p. 415.
6) McCrie's Melville, 2, 188.

Belgic Confession of 1566;[1] in the Helvetic Confession of 1566;[2] and in the Confession of Bohemia of 1573:[3] and in the system of the churches in the Grisons.[4] With these confessions agree the views of Calvin, Beza, and all their coadjutors. We have already exposed the improper conduct of prelatists in reference to the testimony of Calvin. This course is, however, still pursued by men high in office, doubtless from the conviction, that the opinions of Calvin, as an interpreter of scripture, are justly entitled to more weight than those of any other single reformer, Anglican or continental; and that they were greatly instrumental in moulding the opinions of the English reformers. We refer our readers to Dr. Miller's late reply to a letter of bishop Ives of North Carolina, in reference to this subject, as giving the testimony of Calvin in all fulness and fairness, and as justly exposing the craft of prelatists.[5]

The opinions of Beza and other illustrious men, both during the age of the reformers and in the succeeding times, it is unnecessary to produce,[6] had we either the time or the means of doing it, with any thing like detail. It is enough for us to know, that, at the time of the reformation, the presbyterian form of church government, in its essential elements, was established in all the reformed churches of Germany, Scotland, France, Geneva, Switzerland, Holland, &c. And that, although,[7] in the Lutheran churches of Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and other parts of Europe, some ministers were invested with preëminent powers, under different titles, yet that they all, with one voice, declared, that, in the apostolic church, ministerial parity prevailed; and acknowledged, that the order of bishops was brought in by *human authority*, and was a regulation of *expediency* alone. Such was the doctrine maintained by those churches, at that interesting period, and the same doctrine has been maintained by them, uniformly, to the present hour. It follows, then, that the church of *England* stands absolutely ALONE, in the whole protestant world, in asserting the divine institution of prelacy, (if, indeed, she, as a church, *does* assert it, which many of her own most

1) See in the Harmony of Confessions, § 11.

2) In ibid.

3) Ibid.

4) Dr. McCrie's Hist. of the Ref. in Italy, p. 375, 2d ed.

5) The unmanly course ever pursued by prelatical controversialists was most fully sustained by this antagonist. For when he had published his misrepresentations, and Dr. Miller sent this reply, it was refused admission into the same paper. *Sic omnes et semper.*

6) See in addition to the former references, Dr. Miller on the Min. part ii. letter 8; Baxter on Episc. pp. 72, 73, 179, 181.

7) Dr. Miller, p. 387.

respectable sons have denied,) that every other protestant church on earth has formally disclaimed this doctrine, and pronounced the distinction between bishops and presbyters to be a mere *human invention*, and, consequently, that the doctrine of the *jure divino* prelatists, is so far from being the *general* doctrine of the reformed churches, that it *never has been*, and is not, *now*, received, by more than a very small portion, a mere handful, of the protestant world.'

That such was the ecclesiastical system adopted by these reformed churches, might be shown from the statements of eminent Romanists and prelatists now before us.[1] We had also entered, *at length*, upon the exhibition of the original presbyterian character of the church of Scotland, in opposition to the baseless assertions of Mr. Palmer, and others, that it was episcopal. As, however, there is little danger of their finding any credence with sensible and intelligent minds, we will, for the present, merely refer our readers to the following works, where they will find such allegations fully disposed of.[2]

We will now inquire how far, in its original constitution, the church of England was conformable to all the other reformed churches. And as the virulent poison of that uncharitable spirit, which would elevate the question of prelacy into an essential doctrine, has flowed from this fountain, any evidence against such sentiments, *drawn from the same source*, may operate as a counteractive and antidote, and reinvigorate that scriptural system whose destruction has been so ardently sought.

Let us, then, now hear what some of the leading divines and bishops of the reformation have deliberately and freely spoken, in their resolutions of certain questions given to them for their special consideration, and with a view to regulate the changes proposed by king Henry VIII, in the year A. D. 1540.[3] Archbishop Cranmer says, 'In the admission of many of these officers to divers comely ceremonies and solemnities used, which be not of necessity, but only for a good order, and seemly fashion, &c. Again, he teaches,[4] 'the

1) See given in Dr. Miller, ibid, pp. 384, 385; Jameson's Fundament. of the Hier. p. 96; by Heylin; Perceval on Apost. Succ. p. 9; Baptist Noel, on the Unity of the Ch.; Howell's Famil. Letters, 3, 395.

2) See Calderwood's Epistolæ Philad. Vind. in Altare Damascen, pp. 710, 717, &c.; Jameson's Fundament. of the Hier. p. 72, &c.; McCrie's Life of Knox; also, Life of Melville; also, Miscellaneous Wks. p. 178; Jamieson's Hist. of the Culdees, p. 323; Henderson's Life and Times, Introd.; The First and Second Books of Discipline; The Book of the Universal Kirk and Acts of the Assembly.

3) Burnet, Ref. vol. i. p. 464, and Records, B. iii. § 21, vol. iv. p. 123, &c.

4) Ibid, p. 125; 10th Quest. and p. 1272, 12.

bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things, but both one office, in the beginning of Christ's religion.' And again, 'In the New Testament he that is appointed to be a bishop, or a priest, needeth no consecration by the scripture, for election, or appointing thereto, is sufficient.'

'It was proposed by Cranmer,' says Dr. McCrie,[1] 'to erect courts similar to the kirk-sessions, and provincial synods, afterwards introduced into the Scottish church.'[2] In 1547, Cranmer, with the concurrence of the Protector, and privy council, invited a number of learned protestants from Germany into England. He placed Peter Martyr, Martin Bucer, Paul Fagius, and Emanuel Tremellius, as professors in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.[3] 'In a word, pure presbyterianism, without disguise,' says Courayer, 'discovers itself in all the answers of these divines, and it is but too apparent, that the chief aim of these divines and prelates, was, to extinguish episcopacy.'[4] 'It is very evident,' he adds, 'that Cranmer was not master, but that he had been forced to follow the governing party, which was for episcopacy.'[5] This would appear to be certain from the recorded fact, that, as Bonner was busy in degrading him from the highest to the lowest order, he mildly said, 'All this needed not: I had myself done with this gear long ago.'[6]

The bishop of London, in answer to the same interrogatories, replied,[7] 'I think the bishops were first, and yet I think it is not of importance, whether the priest then made the bishop, or else the bishop the priest, considering, (after the sentence of St. Jerome,) 'that in the beginning of the church there was none (or if it were very small) difference, between a bishop and a priest, especially touching the signification.' The bishop of Rochester replied,[8] 'I find in scripture, that Christ, being both a priest and a bishop, ordained his apostles, who were both priests and bishops.' Dr. Robertson replied,[9] '*hic opinor absurdum esse, ut sacerdos episcopum consecret, si episcopus haberi non potest.*' Dr. Cox teaches,[10] 'although by scripture, (as St. Hierome saith,) priests and bishops be one, and, therefore, the one not before the other; yet the bishops, *as they be*, were after priests, and therefore made of

1) Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 402.
2) Burnet, iii. 214; Reformatio. Leg. Eccl. cap. 8, 10.
3) Ibid, p. 79.
4) Ibid, p. 152.
5) Ibid, p. 165.
6) Fox, p. 1883, col. ii.; Willet Syn. Pap. p. 268.
7) Burnet, p. 125.
8) Ibid.
9) Ibid, p. 125, col. ii.
10) Ibid.

priests.' Dr. Day replied,[1] 'and in the beginning of the church as well that word *episcopus* as presbyter, was common, and attributed both to bishops and priests.' Dr. Redmayn answered,[2] 'they be of like beginning, and at the beginning were both one, as St. Hierome, and other old authors show by scripture, whereof one made another indifferently.' Dr. Edgeworth answered,[3] 'Christ, our chief priest and bishop, made his apostles priests and bishops all at once; and they did likewise make others, some priests and some bishops; and, that the priests in the primitive church made bishops, I think no inconvenience,' &c.

The learned martyr, John Lambert, in 1538, in his answer to his ninth and twenty-second articles clearly determines the parity and identity of bishops and presbyters, or ordinary ministers,[4] as 'touching priesthood in the primitive church, when virtue bare (as ancient doctors do deem, and scripture in mine opinion recordeth the same) most room, there were no more officers in the church of God than bishops and deacons: that is to say, ministers, as witnesseth, besides scripture, full apertly Jerome, in his commentaries upon the epistles of Paul,' &c. In the book entitled, 'The Image of a very Christian Bishop and of a Counterfeit Bishop,' written and printed *cum privilegio*, in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII, about 1530, among much to the same effect, the author says,[5] 'and to utter at once what I think, Lo, I will here play the Bedell or common cryer. Be it known to all men, that the bishops of Rome with their clients, bishops, which do now exercise tyranny upon so many cities, in most ample and large dominion, are not bishops by the ordination of God, but by error, and by the seduction of the devil, and by the traditions of men; wherefore, without doubt, they are the messengers and vicars of Satan. First, Paul writeth unto Titus, that he should constitute and ordain presbyters in every town. Here, I suppose, that no man can deny, that all one thing is signified by this word presbyter, and by this word episcopus, in St. Paul's writings.' Similar views were presented, in a treatise published about the same time, on the causes of the divisions between the spirituality and the temporality;[6] by Roderick Mars, sometimes a Gray friar, in his 'Complaint to the Parliament House of England,' about the thirty-seventh year of this king's

1) Burnet, p. 125.
2) Ibid.
3) Ibid.
4) Fox's Acts and Monuments, pp. 541, 553, old ed. in Prynne, 386.
5) Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. p. 394, Lond. 1641; see also pp. 398, 400, 402.
6) In ibid, p. 407 – 409.

reign;[1] by Tindal, who suffered martyrdom in this reign, and who is very explicit, saying, that 'all that were called *elders*, (or priests, if they so will,) were called *bishops* also.'[2]

In 1536, the Institution of a Christian Man, or The Bishop's Book, was published, 'recommended, and subscribed by the two archbishops, nineteen bishops, and by the lower house of convocation.' From this work we have already quoted at some length.[3] It is here maintained, that there are 'but two orders of the clergy: and, that no one bishop has authority over another, according to the word of God.' In chapter forty-three it is said,[4] 'the truth is, that in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinction in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops. Nor is there any word spoken of any other ceremony used in the conferring of this sacrament, but only of prayer, and of the imposition of the bishop's hand.'[5]

The declaration of the functions, &c., of bishops and priests, was made in 1538.[6] It was signed by Cromwell, the two archbishops, and eleven bishops, and twenty divines and casuists. It says, 'there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops, nor is there any word spoken of any other ceremony used in the conferring of this sacrament, but only of prayer, and the imposition of the bishop's hands.' It also says,[7] 'that this office, this power and authority, was committed and given by Christ and his apostles, unto certain persons only, that is to say, unto priests or bishops, whom they did elect and admit thereunto, by their prayers and imposition of their hands.'

In 1543, another book, called The King's Book, was published, also known as A Necessary Erudition for a Christian Man. It was drawn up by a committee of bishops and divines: and was afterwards read and approved by the lords spiritual and temporal, and the lower house of parliament. It was published by order of the king, and designed for a standard of christian belief. In this book it was taught, that there is 'no real distinction between bishops and priests.' Then follows this remarkable passage: 'of these two orders only,

1) Prynne's English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. p. 409.

2) See in Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 139.

3) See Lect. on Apost. Succ. and also above, B. i. ch. vii. § 1; also Brooks's Hist. of Rel. Lib. vol. i. p. 135.

4) See Vaughan's Wickliffe, ii. 276.

5) See also, for further evidence, 'A Supplication to King Henry VIII, in 1544, given by Prynne in his English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. p. 379–386.

6) See Burnet's Reform. Addenda, No. 5, vol. iv. pp. 175, 176.

7) Burnet, vol. iv. p. 176.

that is to say, priests and deacons, scripture maketh express mention, and how they were conferred of the apostles, by prayer and imposition of hands; but the primitive church afterwards appointed inferior degrees, as sub-deacons, acolytes, exorcists, &c.; but lest, peradventure, it might be thought by some, that such authorities, powers, and jurisdictions as patriarchs, primates, archbishops, and metropolitans now have, or heretofore at any time have had, justly and lawfully over other bishops, were given them by God in holy scripture, we think it expedient and necessary, that all men should be advertised and taught, that all such lawful power and authority, of any one bishop over another, were and be given them by the consent, ordinances, and positive laws of men only, and not by any ordinance of God in holy scripture; and all such power and authority, which any bishop has used over another, which have not been given him by such consent and ordinance of men, are in very deed no lawful power but plain usurpation and tyranny.'

In 1550, an act was passed for ordaining ministers, in which no express mention is made in the words of ordination, whether it be for a priest or a bishop. It is well known, that Edward VI, had matured a plan for the still further advancement of the reformation in the church of England.[1] 'Omitting other proofs,' says Dr. McCrie, after speaking of the king's own private plan[2] of his intentions, I shall produce the decisive one of his conduct towards the foreign churches settled in London, under the inspection of John A. Lasco.' 'A. Lasco published an account of the form of government and worship used in these congregations, which greatly resembled that which was introduced into Scotland at the establishment of the reformation. The affairs of each congregation were managed by a minister, ruling elders, and deacons; and each of these offices was considered as of divine institution. Ut infra, fol. 1, 6, b. 11. The inspection of the different congregations was committed to a superintendent, 'who was greater only in respect of his greater trouble and care, not having more authority than the other elders, either as to the ministry of the word and sacraments, or as to the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, to which he was subject equally with the rest.'

Notwithstanding, however, these principles and practices,[3] and their disconformity to the church of England, A. Lasco

1) See McCrie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 405.
2) Do. p. 406.
3) See Brooke's Hist. of Rel. Lib. vol. i. p. 204.

addressed a petition to Sir William Cecil, humbly requesting that these foreign protestants might be favored with a warrant from his majesty's council, not to be interrupted for withdrawing from the worship of the parish churches, but be allowed to assemble themselves in separate congregations. The excellent petitioner was held in the highest esteem, and warmly patronized not only by Cranmer, but also by his majesty, who listened to his petition, and granted him letters patent, forming him and the other ministers of the foreign congregations into a body corporate. The patent is expressed in these words: 'Edward, &c.'[1]

But the ulterior design[2] which the king intended to accomplish by the incorporation of this church, is what we have particularly in view. This is explicitly stated by A. Lasco, in a book which he published in 1555. In his dedication of it to Sigismund, king of Poland, he says; 'When I was called by that king, (Edward VI.) and when certain laws of the country stood in the way, so that the public rites of divine worship used under popery could not immediately be purged out; (which the king himself desired:) and when I was earnest for the foreign churches, it was at length his pleasure, that the public rites of the English churches should be reformed by degrees, as far as could be got done by the laws of the country; but that strangers, who were not strictly bound to these laws in this matter, should have churches granted unto them, in which they should freely regulate all things, *wholly according to apostolical doctrine and practice*, without any regard to the rites of the country; that by this means the English churches also might be excited to embrace the apostolical purity, by the unanimous consent of all the estates of the kingdom. Of the project, the king himself, from his great piety, was both the chief author and the defender.'

Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester, and one of the most pious, learned, and able of the whole body of reformers, English or continental,[3] and who suffered martyrdom A. D. 1554, in his examinations, said; 'I allow the church of Geneva, and the doctrine of the same; for it is catholic and apostolic, and follows the doctrine which the apostles preached; and the doctrine taught and preached in king

1) See given in the above, and in Neal.

2) Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 408. See the whole of this important note, and, in further consideration of this design of further reformation, see numerous proofs in Brooke's Hist. of Rel. Lib. vol. i. pp. 198 – 207, and 299 – 308.

3) See Lond. Chr. Obs. June, 1841, p. 340.

Edward's days, was also according to the same. And are you not ashamed to persecute me and others for your church's sake, which is Babylonian, and contrary to the true catholic church?' In the conference, in 1555, between the martyr Bradford and Dr. Harpesfield, of London, 'tell me,' said the former, 'whether the scripture knew any difference between bishops and ministers, which ye call priests?' To which question the Romanist answered, that there was not; thus proving, that in Queen Mary's days, both Romanists and protestants admitted this fact.[1] Thus Thomas Beacon, a prebend of Canterbury, in his catechism, printed in 1560, teaches that there is 'no difference at all between a bishop and spiritual minister and presbyter, their authority and power is one.'[2] In 1578, as we have seen, dean Wittingham was excommunicated by Sandys, the archbishop of York, for want of episcopal orders. But upon appeal, his ordination was pronounced to be of a better sort than that of the archbishop himself.[3] Robert Wright, who had been ordained by a presbytery at Antwerp, (having sought their ordination from certain scruples about his prelatical orders,) preached seven years in the university of Cambridge, with approbation, though afterwards silenced by the bishop of London.[4] At this time there were some scores, if not hundreds, in the church, who had been ordained according to the manner of the Scots, or other foreign churches.[5]

About the year 1582, we also find that the archbishop of Canterbury licensed John Morrison, a Scotch divine, and who had received no other ordination than what he had received from a Scotch presbytery, to preach over his whole province, in these words; 'Since you were admitted and ordained to sacred orders, and the holy ministry, by the imposition of hands, according to the laudable form and rite of the reformed church of Scotland; and since the congregation of the county of Lothian is conformable to the orthodox faith and sincere religion, now received in this realm of England, and established by public authority; we, therefore, approving and ratifying the form of your ordination and preferment, done in such manner aforesaid, grant you a license and faculty to celebrate divine offices, to minister the sacraments,' &c.[6] By the 13 Eliz. c. 12, ordination by presbyters, without

1) See Fox's Acts and Monum. vol. iii. p. 293.
2) In Prynne's Engl. Prel. p. 434.
3) See the facts fully stated above, in B. i. ch. x. § 3.
4) Neal's Hist. vol. i. p. 310.
5) Neal, ibid.
6) Neal, ibid, pp. 310, 311.

a bishop, was admitted; and ministers who received their orders in foreign churches, were recognised.[1] In 1586, in consequence of 13 Eliz. there were many Scotch divines in possession of benefices; and Mr. Travers, who had been ordained at Antwerp, was lecturer at the Temple, and afterwards provost of Trinity college, Dublin, and tutor to archbishop Usher.[2]

Of bishop Jewell, whose writings constitute the authorized exponents of the doctrines of the Anglican reformers, and who died in 1571, it is said, by a recent writer, that so decidedly presbyterian were his tendencies, and so liberal his views, that 'his contemporaries on the bench looked upon him as an enthusiast, having a decided leaning to the puritans.'[3] Dr. Bancroft,[4] who was archbishop of Canterbury, preaching at Paul's Cross on February 9th, in that noted year, 1588, told his auditory, that Aerius was condemned of heresy with the consent of the universal church, for asserting that there was no difference, by divine right, between a bishop and a presbyter; and that the puritans were condemned by the church in Aerius. The famous Sir Francis Knolls, being surprised at such doctrine, to which they were not in that age so much used as we have been since, wrote to the learned Dr. John Reynolds, who was universally reckoned the wonder of his age, to desire his sense about the matter. The doctor wrote him word in answer, that even Bellarmine the Jesuit owned the weakness of the answer of Epiphanius to the argument of Aerius. He cites also bishop Jewell, who, when Harding had asserted the same thing as Dr. Bancroft, alleged against him Chrysostom, Austin, Hierome, and Ambrose. He adds from Medina, Theodoret, Primasius, Sedulius, and Theophylact. And further adds, himself, Oecumenius, Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, on Titus; and another Anselm, Gregory, and Gratian. It may be added, says he, that they, who, for these five hundred years, have been industrious in reforming the church, have thought that all pastors, whether called bishops or presbyters, have, according to the word of God, like power and authority.

Such, however, was the unpopularity of these sentiments in Bancroft's day, that, in his answer to the foreign churches, settled in London, he subsequently says: 'I am sensible of the merits of Edmond Grindal, bishop of London, and my predecessors in this bishopric, who had reason to take your churches, which are of the same faith with our own, under

1) Neal, ibid.
2) Neal, ibid. p. 289.
3) Dr. Taylor's Biography of the age of Elizab. vol. ii. p. 97.
4) Calamy's Def. of Nonconf. vol. i. pp. 87 – 89.

their patronage.' In 1610, also, when he was archbishop of Canterbury, he agreed, that where bishops could not be had, ordination by presbyters must be valid, otherwise the character of the foreign churches might be questioned. This was on the consecration of the Scotch bishops, when bishop Andrewes raised the question of their ordination, and consequent fitness for consecration. Bancroft insisted on their fitness, and justified his opinion by examples from antiquity, when all acquiesced in his opinion.

In 1592, archbishop Adamson, who had lent himself, soul and body, as a royal tool, to king James, being called to look forward to the prospect of death, applied to the provincial synod of Fife for restoration to office, and recanted his episcopal sentiments.[1]

It was the design of Whitgift's work, which was written at the request of archbishop Parker, the first archbishop of the resuscitated English church, to prove that no certain form of government was enjoined in scripture, or to be perpetually observed in the church.[2] Such, also, was the design of Hooker's immortal work, as has been fully shown.[3] But he goes further. He says,[4] 'Now whereas hereupon some do infer, that no ordination can stand, but only such as is made by bishops, which have had their ordination likewise by other bishops before them, till we come to the very apostles of Christ themselves; in which respect *it was demanded of Beza*, at Poissie, 'by what authority he could administer the holy sacraments, &c. (the reader will observe the instance cited.) . . . To this we answer, that there may be sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination made without a bishop.' And, in a former passage of the same book, he distinctly admits the power of the church at large to take away the episcopal form of government from the church, and says, '*let them*, (that is, bishops,) *continually bear in mind, that it is rather the force of custom*, whereby the church, having so long found it good to continue under the regiment of her virtuous bishops, doth still uphold, maintain, and honor them in that respect, than that any such true and heavenly law can be showed, by the evidence whereof it may of a truth appear, that the Lord himself hath appointed presbyters for ever to be under the regiment of bishops,' adding that 'THEIR AUTHORITY' is 'A SWORD WHICH THE CHURCH HATH POWER TO TAKE FROM THEM.'

1) Life of Melville, pp. 397, 398.
2) Def. p. 659. See Essays on the Ch. p. 234.
3) Lect. on the Apost. Succ. pp. 70, 71.
4) See given in Goode's Rule of Faith, vol. ii. pp. 94, 95.

In 1582, archbishop Grindal[1] issued a circular to the bishops, inciting them to make a collection in aid of the distressed protestants of Geneva, whom he designates as '*so notable and sincere a church.*'

Thus, says the episcopalian author of Essays on the Church,[2] 'thus, for half a century consecutively, and under four successive primacies, we find the voice of the church of England unvarying on this point — that churches which were, as Grindal describes that of Scotland, 'conformable to the *orthodox faith and sincere religion*, now received in this realm of England,' were to be accounted as sisters, notwithstanding differences in discipline.

The same episcopal writer adds:[3] 'It was the judgment of her founders, perhaps unanimously, but at all events generally, that the bishop of the primitive church was merely a presiding elder; a presbyter ruling over presbyters: identical in order and commission; superior only in degree and in authority. . . . . Mr. Palmer, as we have seen, confesses that it was the opinion of Jewell, Hooker, and Field, 'that a mere presbyter might confer every order except the episcopate;' in other words, that the *apostolic succession* of the presbyters might be continued *by presbyters*, the episcopate being laid aside or lost.'

These testimonies of learned, able, and pious divines of the church of England, and these facts, from her practice and spirit towards other churches, might be continued to a much later date. We have before us such a catena, which would fill one of our longest chapters, and which is itself but a portion of what we had collected. We must, however, omit it, with a simple reference to some works, where many of them may be found.[4] Enough has been given to prove, that the early reformed church of England was made prelatical by the force of external circumstances, wholly beyond her control, and that the sentiments of her reformers and leaders were decidedly presbyterian. And we are also prepared to show, that such also have been the views of many of her wisest, best, and ablest members, down to the present day, and that they are not indistinctly shadowed forth even under the veil of those formularies, by which she now gives expression to her prelatical creed.

1) Ibid, p. 235, and Strype's Life, B. ii. ch. xiii.

2) Ibid, pp. 236, 237.

3) Essays on the Church, p. 251.

4) See Dr. Miller on the Min. part i. letter vii. and part ii. letter x.; Plea for Presb. p. 159, &c.; Henderson's Rev. and Consid. p. 268, &c. and 363; Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. 102, 103, where dean Field's views are given at length; and bishop Overall and Mason, on pp. 97 – 100; Baxter on Episcopacy.

# BOOK III.

THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY; WITH AN EXHIBITION OF THE PRESBYTERIANISM OF THE ANCIENT CULDEES OF IRELAND AND SCOTLAND, AND ALSO OF ST. PATRICK.

# CHAPTER I.

## THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY.

§ 1. All *the churches founded by the apostles, and during the age of the apostolical and primitive fathers, were presbyterian.*

It is manifest, that even had the church gone wrong for eighteen hundred years, in assuming and continuing the prelatical form, this would not make her right for a single hour; and that, if the *most* ancient customs and forms are to be preferred, eighteen hundred years are more than fifteen hundred, and the gospel institutions, which are presbyterian, more ancient than those of prelacy and popery.[1] But it is not true that presbytery, which was, as we have seen, the apostolical institution, was not also the form of *primitive* christianity, or that it has not found witnesses for its truth in *every* age of the church. The contrary, however, is, as usual, most peremptorily asserted. Hooker challenges us to find one church on earth that has not been 'ordered by episcopal regiment,' since the very times of the apostles.[2] This bold challenge has been repeated by every prelatical advocate, yea, by every youthful tyro, who is permitted to wear episcopal robes, and who, forthwith, feels authorized to proclaim the '*impious*' conduct of all who dare to preach the gospel without prelatical orders.[3]

Now while we contend, that that church is most ancient which is the most scriptural, and not that which may plead the greatest antiquity in its present location, or in its origin, or in its ecclesiastical founders;[4] yet do we also allow, that the true

1) D'Aubigne, Hist. of Ref. ii. 512. Eng. ed.

2) Eccl. Pol. Pref. § 4, vol. i. p. 34 Hanb. ed. See also bishop Heber's Serm. in Engl. 251, 252.

3) This was done by the Rev. Mr. ——, in St. Philip's church, in Charleston, in the year of our Lord, 1842.

4) See Notes of the Church Examined, pp. 88, 89; Bull's Vindic. of Ch. of Eng. p. 67.

primitive custom of the apostolic churches must be allowed great weight in determining the comparative claims of rival denominations. We boldly, therefore, accept the challenge offered. We affirm, that *many* churches can be pointed out which have been governed on true presbyterian principles, and that witnesses for these principles have not been wanting in every age, and in every church. Nay, we go further. We retort the challenge. We throw it back upon these proud Goliahs, and we demand of them to produce one church *for the first two centuries*, which was ordered according to their prelatical principles. We deny that any such example ever has been produced, or that it ever can: and we affirm, that during that period, all existing churches were *in principle* presbyterian: and that they knew nothing, whatever, of diocesan prelates; nothing of subject presbyters; nothing of the doctrine of three orders of the ministry, as of divine right; nothing of the reordination of presbyters, in order to constitute them presidents of the churches; nothing of the claims now put forth for prelates, as possessing originally and primarily the exclusive powers of preaching, administering the sacraments, of excommunication, jurisdiction, and ordination.

Presbyterianism, so far as it bears on our present inquiry, teaches that there is but one general order of the ministry, called indifferently, bishops, presbyters, teachers, or ministers; that there is, besides, a class of officers called deacons: and representatives of the people, called seniors, or elders: that in any given church, where circumstances required the coöperation of a plurality of presbyters, one was chosen to act as president and *primus inter pares*: and that in such a presbytery, whether attached to a single church, or to many churches, one of the presbyters chosen, either in turn, or by age and merit, would necessarily act as the organ, president, or moderator of the body, either for a limited time, or for life. This system of presbyterianism, we affirm, prevailed in the apostolical churches, and in the churches of the apostolical and primitive fathers, and, to some extent, in other churches of every age.

That it prevailed in every one of the apostolical churches, or those founded by the apostles, we have, we think, given sufficient evidence, and were prepared to offer more, did our limits permit.[1] From the whole of our scriptural investigation, we think it is most clear, that ALL the apostolic churches, of which we have *any* record in the New Testament, were

1) An examination into the case of all the scriptural churches, and also into the nature and value of antiquity, as a mark of a true church, has been omitted for want of room.

constituted on the principles of presbyterianism, and were not under prelatical regiment. By the rules, therefore, of induction, we are entitled to deduce the universal fact, that all the churches throughout the world, constituted by the apostles, were presbyterian, and not prelatic, in their government. We therefore throw back the challenge of our Romish and prelatic brethren, and demand of them the production of one single church, which, *under apostolic direction*, was permanently organized as a prelatic diocesan church.

We proceed to state, that ALL the churches, of which we have any mention in the writings of the apostolical fathers, were presbyterian. Of this, also, the reader has had ample opportunity of forming his own judgment. These churches were particular, and not diocesan. They each of them possessed, according to their necessities, a plurality of presbyters, who were also called bishops. These presbyters elected one to preside among them, and all together constituted the council, or presbytery, by which all the affairs of the church were ordered, all its ordinances regulated, and its entire discipline conducted. Of the various orders of the prelacy there was, at this period, no conception. A diocesan bishop was not existing in any portion of the world. And ordination by diocesan prelates was not only unknown, and unrecorded, but impossible, in the circumstances of the case. All these facts have been already established, and the proof need not be again offered. We again, therefore, throw back the challenge of our opponents, and demand evidence for the existence, during the whole period of the apostolic fathers, of one single example of diocesan episcopacy.

This is equally true of the churches which existed during the time of the primitive fathers, or from A. D. 150 to A. D. 300. During this period, also, the government of the church was vested in a council of presbyters, without whose authority nothing could be done; over whom presided one chosen by the presbyters and the people, who was called the chief presbyter, and by a variety of other names, and who was gradually known, in an especial manner, by the title of bishop. But this president was no more than the pastor of a particular christian community. He had no power beyond his own charge and people. He had no *sole* power of jurisdiction, or of ordination, even within his own congregation; but was in all things subject to his brethren, and required to act with them, and by their direction, even in the matter of ordination. He was expected *personally* to superintend the administration of all ordinances, and the exercise of all discipline, and to be acquainted with the peculiar cases of *each* individual

communicant. There was, therefore, nothing like diocesan prelacy, *in its essential principles*, in any of the churches during this whole period; while there was nothing contradictory to the essential principles of presbyterianism, but much that can be harmonized with no other system of church government and polity.

We again, therefore, throw back the empty glove of our opponents, and boldly deny the existence, during all this period, of one single example of *diocesan* prelacy.

### § 2. *The churches of Gaul, Alexandria, Egypt, Scythia, Bavaria, and the East, were presbyterian.*

'There is great probability,' says Stillingfleet,[1] 'that where churches were planted by presbyters, as the church of France by Andiochus and Benignus, that afterwards, upon the increase of churches and presbyters to rule them, they did, from among themselves, choose one to be as the bishop over them; as Pothinus was at Lyons; for we nowhere read in those early plantations of churches, that where there were presbyters already, they sent to other churches to derive their episcopal ordination from them.' Their bishops, therefore, could have been nothing more than presiding presbyters, and could have no resemblance to prelates, claiming to hold their office by divine right, and as transmitted by the exclusive agency of prelates, like themselves. This is demonstrated from the case of Irenæus, who was one of those bishops, having succeeded Pothinus in the church at Lyons. Pothinus is called, by Nicephorus, the minister of this church;[2] and in the letter of the church, 'bishop,' the terms being then, as in scripture, synonymous, since the only other office they mention is that of deacons.[3] This certainly was the opinion of Irenæus, himself, as has been fully shown.[4] Thus he ascribes to the succession of presbyters, the preserving the apostolical doctrines, and also the succession of the episcopacy.[5] In a word, the church of France was at this time only under the government of presbyters, since Victor, bishop of Rome, writing to Dionysius, bishop of Vienna, in reference to the Easter controversy, desires him to write, not to any prelates, but to the presbyters.[6]

Irenæus was constant moderator of the council of the church of Lyons for twenty-four years, but HE WAS NO PRE-

1) Iren. p. 375.
2) In Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. p. 26.
3) Ibid, p. 26.
4) See B. ii. ch. ii. § 2.
5) See B. ii. ch. iii. § 4.
6) Ep. ad Dion. in Blondel. Apol. p. 35.

LATE. Just as in the Waldensian churches, the moderator presided for life; just as the French presbyteries had constant moderators; and as Dr. Twiss was constant moderator of the Westminster Assembly; while none of these were regarded as any thing more than presbyters. The churches of Gaul were therefore presbyterian, and not prelatical; and their bishops were the presiding presbyters of particular churches, and not diocesan prelates.

The church at Alexandria was also presbyterian. This church was one of the most important in ecclesiastical antiquity. It was the seat of the most celebrated of all the christian colleges or theological seminaries, which was renowned for its doctors, and illustrious for its literature. Pantænus, Clement Alexandrinus, and Origen, were its three first professors. This church, therefore, was a city set on a hill, and gave example and precept to all others. Now that the government of this church was presbyterian, is susceptible of the clearest proof. That it was so, is affirmed by Jerome. After quoting several passages of scripture, to show that a presbyter and bishop are the same, this father adds,[1] 'At Alexandria, also, from Mark, the evangelist, to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters *always* called one, elected from among themselves, and placed in a higher *rank*, their bishop; just as an army may constitute its general, or deacons may elect one of themselves, whom they know to be diligent, and call him archdeacon. For what does a bishop do, with the exception of ordination, which a presbyter may not do?' 'This passage,' says Mr. Goode, an eminent episcopalian author,[2] 'clearly maintains, that, as it respects the sacerdotal character, there is no difference between a bishop and a presbyter; the difference being only to be found in the ecclesiastical distribution of the duties to be performed by them, and what is still more to our purpose, that appointment to the episcopal office by the presbyters of a church, is sufficient (as far as essentials are concerned) to entitle a presbyter to perform the duties of the episcopal function.'

It is, however, attempted to obviate the force of this testimony, by alleging that Jerome only attributes to the presbyters the right of *election*, while the bishops they elected were *ordained* by some other bishops. This, however, is a vain refuge, and can afford no help.[3] Jerome is not alone in

1) Ep. ad Evagrum, Ep. 146, op. tom. i. col. 1082, ed. 1766.

2) Divine Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 84.

3) See this fully and most admirably shown by Baxter, in his Disput. on Ch. Govt. pp. 216–218, which we are obliged to omit.

thus testifying to the presbyterianism of Alexandria. Eutychius, who was afterwards bishop of this church, bears the same testimony. After mentioning[1] that Mark, the evangelist, went and preached at Alexandria, and appointed Hananias the first patriarch there, he adds, 'Moreover, he appointed twelve presbyters with Hananias, who were to remain with the patriarch, so that when the patriarchate was vacant, they might elect one of the twelve presbyters, upon whose head the other eleven might place their hands, and bless him, (or invoke a blessing upon him,) and *create* him patriarch, and then choose some excellent man, and appoint him presbyter with themselves, in place of him who was thus made patriarch, that there might be always twelve. Nor did this custom respecting the presbyters, namely, that they should *create* their patriarchs from the twelve presbyters, cease at Alexandria, until the times of Alexander, patriarch of Alexandria, who was of the number of the three hundred and eighteen bishops at Nice, &c.' 'I have given this passage,' adds Mr. Goode, 'in full, because it has been sometimes replied, that it referred only to the *election* of the patriarch, and that we must suppose that he was afterwards consecrated to his office by bishops. But it is evident to any one who takes the whole passage together, that such an explanation is altogether inadmissible; and, moreover, the very same word (which, following Selden, we have translated *created*,) is used with respect to the act of the presbyters, as is afterwards used with respect to the act of the bishops in the appointment.'

The learned Renaudot, in attempting to show that this passage refers only to election, and not to ordination, is compelled, however, to contradict himself, and, like the high priest, to bear witness to the truth. For, while he insists that the word here means holding up their hands, as in elections, and not laying on hands, as in ordination, yet, afterwards[2] stumbling upon a passage from Severus, where the former translation suited his views, or was so evidently the sense of the passage that he could not otherwise translate it, he blames Echellensis and Morinus for translating it in the latter way, and affirms it to mean ordination by the imposition of hands. This, surely, betrays rather a bad cause; and, in fact, the meaning of the passage does not wholly depend upon that one word, the word *created* being still more decisive. Renaudot further admits, that George Elmacinus, in the first part of his Annals, gives the same account of the matter as Euty-

1) See the original, given in Goode's Div. Rule of Faith, vol. ii. p. 81, and in Selden's ed. of his work, pp. 29–31.

2) See Goode, as above, p. 82.

chius.[1] He also quotes Severus, as saying, that, after the death of Theonas,[2] 'the priests and people were collected together at Alexandria, and laid *their* hands upon Peter, his son in the faith, and disciple, a priest, and placed him in the patriarchal throne.' But even this is not all. The author of the Commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles, attributed to Ambrose, or to Hilary, says,[3] 'Moreover, in Egypt the presbyters confirm, if a bishop is not present. But because the presbyters that followed began to be found unworthy to hold the primacy, the custom was altered, the council foreseeing that not order, but merit, ought to make a bishop, and that he should be appointed by the judgment of *many priests*, lest, &c.' The same thing is affirmed by the author of Questions on the Old and New Testament, ascribed to Augustine.[4] And that this practice — the election and consecration, as far as any form of induction was used, of their bishop by the presbyters — was not peculiar to Alexandria, but was common even at Rome, is proved by Eusebius, who relates,[5] that 'in the appointment of Fabianus to the bishropric of Rome, the assembly that met to elect a bishop, having fixed upon him, *placed him at once on the episcopal throne*,' 'which seems to me,' says Mr. Goode, very candidly, 'irreconcilable with the notion of the essential necessity of episcopal consecration, to have entitled him to the episcopal seat, for he was installed in it without any such consecration.'

Now it is thus proved, by numerous witnesses, and admitted by many prelatists,[6] that the presbyters of Alexandria made their own bishops, by electing one of their number to act as their president, and that this practice had continued since the days of Mark, that is, about thirty-five years before the death of John ;[7] so that we have the implied approbation of this apostle for a practice subversive of all ideas of prelacy, and based upon the assumed certainty of the principles of presbyterian parity.[8]

1) Hist. Patr. Alex. p. 10 in Goode.

2) In ibid.

3) In Eph. 4 : 11, 12, in Goode.

4) August. Op. tom. iii. App. col. 93.

5) Eccl. Hist. B. vi. c. 29, in Goode, vol. ii. p. 85.

6) Palmer's Treatise on the Ch. ii. 418. 'It may seem probable, from Jerome,' says Burnet, (Obs. on the 1st Canon, p. 8,) 'that presbyters chose their own bishop out of their own number, and that, in Alexandria, they made him bishop without any new ordination;' Thorndike's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. p. 58; Nolan's Cath. Char. of Christ. p. 19; Natalus Alex. Eccl. Dissert. pp. 123, 124.

7) It is supposed, that Mark was slain about the sixty-third year of our Lord, and the tenth of Nero ; and that Peter and Paul were put to death about the sixty-sixth year of our Lord, and thirteenth of Nero ; and that John, the apostle, died about the ninety-eighth year of our Lord, and the first of Trajan, which was about thirty-five years after the death of Mark.

8) See also on this subject Jame-

In connection with this proof of the presbyterianism recognised in the church of Alexandria, may be mentioned the fact, stated by Du Pin, in relation to the case of Ischryas.[1] 'Ischryas,' says Du Pin, 'had dwelt at Mareotis, a country of Egypt, where there was *neither bishop nor suffragan, but only* a great many parishes *governed by priests*.'

The Scythian churches beyond Ister,[2] from the year 260, which was that of their captivity under Galienus, and the time of their first conversion to christianity, till the year 327, were governed by presbyters, and were thus about seventy years without any bishop. For, according to Philostorgius, the Gothic churches were both planted and governed by presbyters, and continued so till Ulphilas, whom he names their first bishop. This bishop was ordained by Eusebius and others, that joined him at the time of the change of their government under Constantine.

The province of Bavaria,[3] which was anciently inhabited by the Boiarians, was governed by presbyters, without bishops, for any thing that appears, from the time of their first conversion to the christian faith, till Vivilo was imposed on them by pope Zachary, about the year 740. It is thought they were brought to embrace the gospel about the year 540, and so it was two hundred years before they had any other government among them save that of presbytery. For Bonifacius Moyunt visited this church, and found no bishop among them save Vivilo, who had been lately sent thither. This, Boniface, the pope, writes in these words, namely, 'Whereas, thou signifiedst thou hadst travelled through the nation of the Boiarians, and found them living without the ecclesiastical order, not having any bishops in the province, save one Vivilo, whom we ordained sometime before; the presbyters, therefore, whom thou foundest there, if it be uncertain by whom they were ordained, whether by bishops or not, let them receive orders from their bishop, and so let them discharge their office.' Thus it is plain, that before Vivilo was imposed on the Boiarians by pope Zachary, that large province of Bavaria was under a presbyterial government; and yet, it was very large, and at this day the third part thereof has its archbishop, whom Strabo reckons to be inferior to none in Germany, either in jurisdiction or revenue. The

son's Sum of Episc. Contr. p. 200; also his Cyp. Isot. p. 494; Jamieson's Hist. of the Culdees, p. 332; Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. pp. 150, 172.

1) Eccl. Hist. cent. iv. tom. ii. p. 29.

2) Philostorgius, Phil. lib. ii. c. 5. in Blondel, p. 103; and Stillingfleet Iren.; and in full also in Nat. Alexand. p. 137.

3) Ayton's Orig. Constit. of the Ch. pp. 531, 532.

pope did indeed require a reordination of these presbyters, but this is no surprise in the seventh or eighth century.'

Blondel proves, also, that, in the fourth century, many churches throughout the east, during the persecutions, constituted bishops by the aid of their presbyters, who taught them in the faith; and that, too, when other bishops were accessible, and when there was no imperative necessity impelling them to such a course.[1]

## § 3. *The primitive churches in Britain were presbyterian.*

When, how, by whom, and to what extent, the gospel was first introduced into Britain, is a question to which very different answers have been given! The grounds upon which the early promulgation of the gospel in Britain is based, are summarily and very ably presented by Mr. Soames.[2]

Dr. Adam Clarke reconciles the different accounts by supposing, that different persons may have introduced the gospel into different parts of the island, as it then existed under several independent governments.[3] The evidence in favor of the supposition, that the apostle Paul visited Britain, or that the gospel came to Britain through his direct or indirect instrumentality, certainly preponderates and gives to it the greatest probability.[4]

1) See the whole evidence and argument in Blondel's Apol. and as quoted in Nat. Alex. Diss. Eccl. pp. 139, 140.

2) Anglo Saxon, Ch. Introd. where the original authorities are given, pp. 1–6. See this subject discussed in Stillingfleet's Origines Britannicæ. Collier's Ecc. Hist. Adam Clarke's Acct. of Introd. of the Gosp. into Britain, Lond. 1815. Fuller's Ch. Hist. Simpson's Brit. Eccl. Hist. Bingham's Antiq. B. ix. ch. i. Hough's Reply to Dr. Wiseman, p. 47, &c. Burgess's Tracts on the Origin and Independ. of the Brit. Ch. Usher's Religion of the Anc. Irish and British, and his Brit. Eccl. Antiq. Fox in Acts and Monum. B. ii. ch. i. Lawson's Disc. on Introd. of Christ. into Britain. Spelman's Concilia. pp. 1–30. Divine Right of Ch. Govt. p. 267, Append. Henry's Hist. of England, &c. Pictorial Hist. of Engl. vol. i. p. 76, &c. Masoni Vind. Anglic. Eccl. Dr. Clarke, at pp. 13–15, gives the account of six British Synods in Councils before A. D. 519, besides the Councils of Arles, Nice, and Ariminum, where British bishops were present. An Hist. Acct. of the Britannic Ch. Lond. 1692. Vidal's Mosheim, vol. ii. pp. 16–22. Wake's Apost. Fathers. Prel. Disc. § 26, p. 67. Gieseler, 1, 123, 313, 361. Brooke's Rel. Lib. vol. i. p. 21, &c.

3) Account, &c. as above, p. 9.

4) See Stillingfleet, Collier, Clarke, Henry, and Fuller.— We shall here present an outline of the evidence in proof of the early origin, independence, and protestantism of the British church.

| *Events.* | *Authorities.* |
|---|---|
| I. | |
| 1. The gospel preached in Britain in the earliest times. | 1. Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Arnobius. |
| 2. Preached in Britain before the defeat of Boadicea, A. D. 61. | 2. Gildas. |
| 3. Preached among the Celtic nations (of which Britain was one) by the apostles. | 3. Irenæus. |
| 4. Preached in Britain by some of the apostles | 4. Eusebius, Theodoret, Nicephorus. |

Whatever doubts may be cloud the period of the first evangelization of Britain, it may be seriously maintained, that it received the gospel before Rome. Stuart avers, that it was proclaimed in Britain, from the first rising of it. And Baronius, on the authority of some MSS in the Vatican, assigns, as the period of the first christianization of Britain, the year A. D. 35, which would be, at least, nine years prior to the organization of the Romish church.[1] Britain, then, did not receive the gospel, primarily, through any agency of Rome. This is most certain, from the fact, that her ecclesiastical customs were similar to those of the oriental churches, and different from those of the Roman church; and that, too, not only in the administration of baptism, but also as it regards the observance of Easter, on which these churches dissented so violently.[2] It is, therefore, manifestly absurd to trace up to Rome, either the authority, the doctrine, or the ministerial succession, of the British churches. They were, for the first six hundred years, independent of the jurisdiction of Rome, as appears, not only from the continuance of their

| II. | |
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| 5. Preached in Spain by St. Paul. | 5. Athanasius, Cyril, Epiphanius, Jerome, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Gregorius, M. |
| 6. Preached in the western parts by St. Paul. | 6. Jerome. |
| 7. Preached in the extremity of the West by St. Paul. | 7. Clement Romanus. |
| 8. Britain included in the West, and the boundary of the gospel to the West. | 8. Catullus, Eusebius, Jerome, Arnobius, Theodoret, Nicephorus. |
| 9. Preached in the islands that lie in the ocean, by St. Paul. | 9. Jerome, Theodoret. |
| 10. Preached in Britain, by St. Paul. | 10. Venantius, Fortunatus, Sophronius. |

*Confirmation of Gildas's testimony.*

| III. | |
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| 1. St. Paul sent to Rome in the second year of Nero. (A. D. 56.) | 1. Eusebius, Jerome, Bede, Frecalphus, Ivo, Platina, Magdeburgici, Petavius, Scaliger, Capellus, Simson, Stillingfleet. |
| 2. Pomponia Græcina, and Claudia Rufina, two British ladies at Rome, at that time. | 2. Tacitus. Martial. |
| 3. Pomponia Græcina accused of foreign superstition. (A. D. 57.) | 3. Tacitus. |
| 4. Caractacus's family sent to Rome. (A. D. 51.) | 4. Tacitus. |
| 5. Caractacus's family returned to Britain after seven years' detention at Rome. (A. D. 58 or 59.) | 5. British Triads compared with Tacitus in No. 4. |
| 6. St. Paul's first imprisonment expired. (A. D. 58 or 59.) | 6. Acts of the Apostles 28: 30, compared with Eusebius, Jerome, &c. No. 1. |
| 7. Caractacus's father introduced christianity into Britain. | 7. British Triads. |

See Bishop Burgess's Tracts.

1) See Bull's Corruptions of the Church of Rome, p. 227. This position is very largely proved by bishop Burgess, in his Tracts on the Origin and Indep. of the Anct. Brit. Ch. at pp. 21–54. He adduces testimonies from each of the first six centuries, pp. 47–52, and also from Parker, Camden, Usher, Stillingfleet, Cave, Gibson, Nelson, Collier, Godwin, Rapin, Bingham, Stanhope, Warner, Trapp, &c. among the moderns. See also p. 55. He again dwells on the subject at pp. 109–120, and at 127.

2) Do. do. p. 227, 228.

peculiar customs, but also from the *unanimous* testimony of historians.[1] The churches of Britain, indeed, have never yet been *canonically* under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome.[2]

The early history of the British churches being thus obscure, it is not easy to fix the period at which regular churches were first formed.[3] That they were constituted, however, 'from a remote period,'[4] and as soon as christianity had made any progress, cannot be doubted.[5] And that they were, in their character, presbyterian and not prelatical, will appear to be equally certain. Romanists, in order to secure their ends, are driven to the hazardous attempt of denying all the evidence in the case, as to any early christianization of Britain; while prelatists have invented equally preposterous schemes for supplying it with some kind of prelacy. But both have labored in vain, since facts are stubborn things, and will neither lie nor die. As to the opinion of Romanists, nothing can be more unwarrantable. Austin, when he landed on the shores of Britain, found ministers and churches already among the inhabitants, and that they had existed from that time up till near the days of the apostles, is certified by testimony in each successive century.[6] Stillingfleet, on the other hand, as advocate for prelatists, in his Antiquities of the British Churches, is forced to acknowledge, that no lineal succession of bishops can be pretended in the ancient British churches. 'We cannot,' he says,[7] 'deduce a lineal succession of bishops, as they could in other churches, where writings were preserved. By the loss of records of the British churches, we cannot draw down the succession of bishops from the apostles' time.'[8] 'Although, therefore,' adds this most modest of all writers, when prelacy is in danger, 'by the loss of records of the British churches, we cannot draw down the succession of bishops from the apostles's time, (for that of the bishops of London, by Jocelin, of Furnes, is not worth mentioning,) yet we have great reason to *presume* such a succession.'[9]

Similar is the manifest awkwardness with which Mr. Palmer, by the aid of that sophistry, in the use of which he is

1) Ibid, p. 23, and Edgar's Variations of Popery, p. 153.
2) See Origin of the Common Prayer Book, p. 49.
3) Palmer's Orig. Lit. vol. i. 176.
4) Ibid, p. 180.
5) This is fully admitted and urged by Bishop Burgess, in Tracts, as above, p. 66.
6) See Burgess's Tracts, as above, p. 127, &c., where the proof in reference to each of these periods is dwelt on.
7) Fol. ed. pp. 77, 81, 83.
8) Irenicum. 9) Ibid, p. 77.

such an adept, has recently endeavored to obscure the plainest of facts.[1] Usher, in his great work, De Britanicarum Ecclesiarum Primordiis, only gives the catalogue of bishops from A. D. 433,[2] nor does he tell us whether, even then, they were properly to be regarded as *prelatical* or *parochial*, that is, presbyterian bishops, which is a very important question. That there were *bishops* in Britain from its first conversion, we do not doubt, but that they were any other than presbyterian pastors, we have, as yet, seen no reasonable ground for believing. And yet, upon the single fact, that there were in the British churches, *bishops*, and that in the fourth century these appeared in councils, does Mr. Ledwich DEMONSTRATE their *original prelacy!!*[3] So utterly ignorant are prelatists of the very first principles of our ecclesiastical polity, or of the truth, that both in scripture and in presbyterianism, bishop means pastor, presbyter, or minister.[4]

To our minds the presumption is entirely the other way, that is, *against* the prelatic and *in favor* of the presbyterian polity of the primitive British churches. This presumption we build, in the first place, upon the acknowledged probability, that they were established by the apostle Paul. Now, it has been already shown, that Paul was, avowedly, a presbyter; that he was ordained as an example to all future ages, by a presbytery; that he himself ordained presbyters, and, as as far we know, *only* presbyters, in all the churches organized by him; that he expressly delegated to the Ephesian presbyters the entire rule, government, and jurisdiction of the episcopate; that he sanctioned the ordination of Timothy by a presbytery; and that we are, therefore, required to believe, that, in constituting a church in Britain, he would not give to it a prelacy, when, to the Roman, Ephesian, Philippian, and other churches, he had given only the simpler model of a *presbytery*. Another ground on which we rest this presumption, is the connection between the British and Gallic churches. It was from Gaul the christian religion first spread into Britain.[5] The forms, doctrines, and opinions, of the British and the Gallic churches were similar wherein they were both discordant with those of the Romish church.[6]

1) On the church, vol. ii. p. 180.

2) See also Broughton's Eccl. Dict. fol. i. 161.

3) Antiq. of Ireland, p. 54, 57.

4) See also Prynne's Eng. Prel. vol. ii. p. 499, &c.

5) Mosheim, Eccl. Hist. B. i. cent. ii. P. i. c. 1, vol. i. 121.

6) Ledwich's Antiq. p. 112. Jamieson's Hist. of Culdees, p. 214. Usher's Relig. of the Anc. Irish and Brit. ch. iv. At the Synod of Streoneshalch, (now Whitby,) A. D. 662, bishop Coleman, and the Culdee presbyters, reasoned upon the equal authority of the apostle John, while the Romanists urged that of Peter. (See Jamieson, pp.

Now that, in the first ages, *prelacy* was unknown to the Gallic churches, is very clear, as we have already proved. And, therefore, the strong presumption is, that the polity of the British churches, also, was not prelatic. A third ground on which we rest this presumption is, the entire absence of any proof of a prelatical succession, which is, nevertheless, essential to the establishment of the prelatical character of the early British churches. On this point Stillingfleet, Collier, and Palmer, are reluctantly candid.[1] The first traces of bishops in Britain are found in the *fourth* century,[2] when three were present at the Council of Arles, held A. D. 314. But that these were *diocesan prelates*, or of the same essential character as modern prelates, there is no evidence whatever. As to their sitting in synod, we know, that even presbyters were anciently entitled to this privilege, until ejected by the encroaching despotism of the prelates; and, after this period Columba, who was but a presbyter, when he appeared as the representative of the clergy in Albanian Scotia, was received with the greatest attention and respect.[3]

A fourth argument for the presbyterian polity of the primitive British christianity, is deducible from the fact, that on the arrival of Austin the Monk, the ancient clergy who had retired to Wales on the Saxon invasion, refused to submit to the authority of the pope, and endured, many of them, death, rather than abandon their liberty, and their pure and uncorrupted faith. It is evident, from the testimony of the old Chronicle,[4] quoted by bishop Davies in his letter to archbishop Parker, that the Britons not only rejected the authority of Austin, but the doctrines and usages of his church. The Chronicle says, that they would hold no communication with the Saxons, *when converted by Austin*, because 'they corrupted with superstition, images, and idolatry, the true religion of Christ.' The length to which they carried their protestantism is very remarkable. 'The Britons,' says Bede, 'would no more communicate with the anglo-Saxons than with pagans.' The Irish had exactly the same sentiments. 'The British priests, that is, presbyters,' complains Aldhelm, 'puffed up with a conceit of their own purity, do exceedingly abhor communion with us, insomuch that they neither

222, 223, and Stuart's Hist. of Armagh, App. xiii. p. 627.) See also Palmer's Origines Liturgicæ, vol. i. pp. 144, 153, 157, 176, 180, &c. Henry's Britain, vol. i. 201. Mackintosh's Hist. of England, and Stillingfleet's Antiq. of the Brit. Ch. p. 135.

1) See Collier's Eccl. Hist. B. i. cent. iv. fol. ed. vol. i. p. 26.

2) Gieseler's Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 123, § 56.

3) Adam vita Columb. in Stuart, p. 624.

4) Burgess's Tracts, p. 102.

will join in prayers with us in the church, nor in communion, nor will they enter into society with us at table; the fragments we leave after refection, they throw to the dogs. The cups, also, out of which we have drank, they will not use until they have cleansed them with sand and ashes. They refuse all civil salutations, and will not give us the kiss of pious fraternity. Moreover, if any of us go to take an abode among them, they will not vouchsafe to admit us, till we are compelled to spend forty days in penance.'[1] The British christians, when the customs of Rome were made known to them, found them to be so contrary to their own simple and primitive rites, that when they met Augustine at the celebrated conference with him, Dinoth the abbot of Bangor, and who was, therefore, a presbyter, in the name of his brethren entered a solemn protest, and declared themselves independent of all Romish interference. 'The British churches,' said he,[2] 'owe the deference of brotherly kindness and charity to the pope of Rome, and to all christians. But other obedience than this, they did not know to be due to him whom they called pope: and for their parts, they were under the jurisdiction of the bishop, (that is, presbyter,) of Caerleon upon Usk, who, under God, was their spiritual overseer and director. At a later period, in the seventh century, the king and clergy of Northumberland,[3] treated with contempt the papal mandate to restore his deposed bishop.' Now be it remembered, that one of the very articles for which these British churches declared themselves protestant was, 'the multiplication of bishops,' since, on their plan, every church had its own bishop, whether in the country or in cities.'[4]

A still further source of presumptive proof against the supposed prelatic constitution of the British churches is found in the fact, that of the six nations or tribes into which, in the sixth century, Britain was divided, at least five of them received their knowledge of the gospel and its institutions from the Culdees, or the Scotch-Irish christians, or from Gaul. This was the case as it regards the Scots or Irish: the Picts; the Angles; the Saxons, and the Jutes.[5] Their polity must have been the same, therefore, as that found at the same time among the Culdees, which we shall prove was *essentially presbyterian*. Gildas also, in the sixth century, as Stilling-

1) Ledwich's Antiq. p. 63.
2) Collier's Eccl. Hist. of Britain, vol. i. p. 178, ed. 1840.
3) Spelman's Concilia, i. pp. 162, 203, in Orig. of Com. Pr. B. p. 76.
4) Ledwich's Antiq. of Ireland, pp. 56, 84, &c.
5) See Origin and Compilation of the Prayer Book, pp. 128–132.

fleet teaches, ascribes to ALL ministers a succession, even to St. Peter. He calls the British churches[1] *Sedem Petri*, the see of St. Peter. 'I confess,' says Usher, 'Gildas hath these words, but quite in another sense [than the Romish]; for in the beginning of his invective against the clergy, among other things he charges them, that they did *sedem Petri apostoli immundis pedibus usurpare*. Doth he mean, that they defiled St. Peter's chair at Rome? No, certainly; but he takes St. Peter's chair for that which all the clergy possessed, and implies in it no more than their ecclesiastical function; and so he opposes it to the chair of Judas, into which, he saith, such wicked men fell.'

Gildas, therefore, may be regarded in accordance with the views of the Culdees, as ascribing apostolical succession to all true ministers of Christ.

That the forms and orders of the Romish hierarchy came afterwards to be established in Britain, no one disputes. But even *then* the sentiments derived from a recollection of her primitive presbyterianism continued to prevail. Of this we have a remarkable proof. Amongst the canons and decrees of the British and Anglo-Saxon churches, are found the canons of Elfric to bishop Wulfin. Howell thinks they were both bishops. Fox, the Matyrologist, says, 'that Elfric is supposed by Capgrave, and William of Malmsbury, to have been archbishop of Canterbury, about 996; and Wulfinus, or Wulfin, to have been bishop of Scyrbune or Sherborn.[2] Elfric's two epistles, in the Saxon canons and constitutions, were given by Wulfstane, bishop of Worcester, as a great jewel to the church of Worcester.[3] In the tenth canon, Elfric numbers seven decrees, or orders, as follows: 1. Osliarius, or doorkeeper; 2. Reader; 3. Exorcist; 4. Alolyth; 5. Sub-deacon; 6. Deacon; 7. *Presbyter*.' These are *all* the orders he mentions in the church. He does not mention the *bishops* as either degree or order. But, under the order of presbyter, he says, 'there is no more difference between the mass-presbyter and the bishop, than this, that the bishop is appointed to confer ordinations, and to see to the execution of the laws of God, which, if every presbyter should do it, would be committed to too many. BOTH, INDEED, ARE ONE AND THE SAME ORDER, although the part of the bishop is the more

1) Antiq. of the Br. Ch. fol. ed. p. 363.

2) Powell, on the Ap. Succ. pp. 44, 45.

3) Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. ii. p. 376, fol. ed. London, 1684.

honorable.[1] In further proof of this point, we refer to the declarations made by Colman, bishop of Lindisfern, at a conference held at Whitby, in A. D. 661, to determine whether the ancient or the Romish customs should be retained. 'The easter I keep,' said Colman,[2] 'I received from my presbyters, WHO SENT ME bishop hither: the which all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have kept after the same manner; and that the same may not seem to any contemptible, or worthy to be rejected, it is the same which St. John the Evangelist, and the churches over which he presided, observed.'

In further confirmation of these views, we might adduce the testimony of many writers. That of Cœlus Sedulius Scotus, about 390, has been given, and is very strong. 'To him,' says Prynne,[3] 'I might annex our famous Gildas, in his *Acris Correptio Cleri Anglicæ*, our venerable Beda, in his *Acta Apostolorum*, cap. 20, tom. v. col. 657, and *Alcuinus, de divinis officiis*, cap. 35, 36, epistola 108, *ad Sparetum, and Comment. in Evang. Ioannis*, l. 5 to 25, col. 547–549, who maintain the self-same doctrine of the parity of bishops and presbyters; declaim much against the pride, lordliness, ambition, domineering power, and other vices of prelates; and conclude, that a bishopric is *nomen operis, non honoris;* a name of labor, not of honor; a work, not a dignity; a toil, not a delight. But I rather pass to Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, a man without exception, and the greatest scholar in his age, who, near six hundred years since, in his Enarration on the Epistle to the Philippians, cap. 1, ver. 1, resolves thus. 'With the bishops, that is, with the presbyters and deacons, for he hath put bishops for elders, after his custom. . . . . *It is therefore* MANIFEST, BY APOSTOLIC INSTITUTION, THAT ALL PRESBYTERS ARE BISHOPS, albeit NOW *those greater ones have obtained that title*. For, a bishop is called an overseer; and every presbyter ought to attend the cure over the flock committed to him.' In his commentary on the first chapter of Titus, verses 5, 7, he hath the self-same words that Hierome and Sedulius used before him, concluding from Acts 20: 17, 28, and Phil. 1: 1, that, AMONG THE ANCIENTS, PRESBYTERS WERE THE VERY SAME THAT BISHOPS WERE. 'I read, also,' says Mr. Prynne,[4] 'in our rare historian, Matthew Paris, Thomas Walsingham, Ypodigma Neustriæ, Anno 1166, p.

1) Canons, &c. a Laur. Howel, A. M. pp. 66, 67. fol. Londoni, 1708; Spelmani, Concil. tom. i. 576, 586; Prynne's English Prelacy, vol. ii. 316.

2) Bede, l. 3, c. 25; Ledwich, 55.

3) In his English Lordly Prelacy, vol. ii. pp. 314, 315.

4) English Prelacy, 2, 256.

36; and John Bale, centur. 2, Script. Britan. § 96, 97, pp. 206, 207. That in the year of our Lord, 1166, certain sowers abroad of wicked doctrine at Oxford, were brought into judgment before the king, and the bishops of the kingdom, who, being devious from the catholique faith, and overcome in trial, they were stigmatized in the face, and then banished out of the kingdom. What this wicked opinion was, John Bale, out of Guido Perpinianus de Heresibus relates, saying, that those men were certain Waldenses, who taught, that the church of Rome was the whore of Babylon, and the barren fig-tree, whom Christ himself had long ago accursed; and, moreover, that men are not to obey the pope AND BISHOPS, and that orders, (to wit, popish orders,) are the characters of the great beast.'

Of our position there is still further evidence in the fact, that chorepiscopi, or rural bishops, were established in the British churches; since an old writer informs us there was one at Canterbury, who dwelt in the church of St. Martin, without Canterbury.[1] Rural bishops were, therefore, we may presume, placed in every church; and thus would the parochial episcopacy, that is, presbyterianism, be perpetuated.

We shall further adduce the evidence of Wickliffe, the morning star of the reformation, the leader of his age, the glory of his country, and the benefactor of the world. And here it is with honest pride we reveal the fact, that while Huss and Jerome of Prague lit their torches at the fire kindled by the English reformer, Wickliffe was himself indebted for the quickening of his own mighty spirit to Fitz Ralph, otherwise called Armachanus, his great Irish predecessor. So that after all, Ireland, which was in primitive ages the island of saints, and the home of presbyterianism, became the day-spring to that glorious morning, which, after a night of intervening darkness, shone upon the world. Fitz Ralph was archbishop of Armagh from 1347 to 1359. He was the most vigorous opponent of the Mendicants; maintained the sufficiency of the scriptures for all purposes of faith and duty, proclaimed the original truth, that 'if all the prelates in the world were dead, presbyters could still ordain,' and was *honored* with the charge of heresy, and the endurance of much Romish persecution. Bellarmine states, that Wickliffe derived from the archbishop's writings several of his alleged errors. That he was acquainted with his writings is certain, and that, in the very year Armachanus died, Wickliffe took up the

1) Ger. Dorob. Hist. Pontif. ecc. Cant. Ledwich, 83.

same controversy in England, which *he* had pursued in Ireland, and by which he was led on to his ultimate discovery of the whole truth, is also a well-ascertained fact.[1]

Wickliffe spent a long and laborious life in the maintenance and diffusion of the principles of presbyterianism, considering that term, as we may well do, as including the true principles of religious liberty, as well as of ecclesiastical parity.[2] The origin of the distinctions which had obtained among the secular clergy, is thus given;[3] 'BY THE ORDINANCE OF CHRIST, PRIESTS AND BISHOPS ARE ALL ONE. But afterwards, the emperor divided them, and made bishops lords, and priests their servants; and this was the cause of envy, and quenched much charity.' 'I boldly assert one thing, namely, that in the primitive church, or in the time of Paul, two orders of the clergy were sufficient, that is, a priest and a deacon. In like manner I affirm, that in the time of Paul, presbyter and bishop were names of the same office. This appears from the third chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy, and in the first chapter of the Epistle to Titus. And the same is testified by that profound theologian, Jerome.' 'From the faith of the scriptures, it seems to me to be sufficient, that there should be presbyters and deacons holding that state and office which Christ has imposed on them, since it appears certain, that these degrees and orders have their origin in the pride of Cæsar. If, indeed, they were necessary to the church, Christ and his apostles would not have been silent respecting them, as those impiously pretend, who magnify the papal laws above those of Christ.'

Nor were these the sentiments of Wickliffe alone. They were the opinions of a vast number in his own age, and they continued to impregnate the British nation, until they prepared the way both in Scotland and in England, for the reformation. They constituted the ground of accusation against William Swinderby, a martyr under Richard the Second;[4] and against Walter Bute, Nicholas Hereford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton, and generally against all the Wickliffeites.[5] In 1382, according to Knighton, every second man in the kingdom was of Wickliffe's sect.[6] A concession to the same effect is made by Sir Thomas

1) Dr. Reid's Hist. of Presb. Ch. in Ireland, vol. i. p. 7.

2) Vaughan's Life, vol. ii. pp. 274–276.

3) Vaughan's Life of, vol. ii. pp. 274-276.

4) See Fox, Acts and Monuments, pp. 431–434, ed. 1610, and vol. i. pp. 609, 615–617, 619, ed. ult. in Prynne, p. 329.

5) Ibid, pp. 622, 642, 653. In ibid, p. 331.

6) De eventibus Angliæ ad Ann. Vaughan, 2, 150.

More.[1] The seed was then sown, from which sprung the harvest of the reformation, or, to use Knighton's simile, the root was then planted, from which started those saplings, which multiplied and filled every place within the compass of the land. The harrow of persecution, by which the soil of the English church was so relentlessly torn up from the year 1380 to the year 1431, caused the seed to shoot up the more vigorously, so that, even in 1422, 'the Wickliffeites in England were grown to be so many, that they could not be suppressed without an army.'[2] Lord Cobham, who was hanged and burned, A. D. 1417, when examined, spoke of the church having received 'the venom of Judas.' The arch bishop inquired,[3] what that venom meant, and the answer was, 'your possessions and lordships.' These things are said to have made 'Rome the very nest of antichrist, out of which come all the disciples of antichrist, of whom prelates, priests, and monks, are the body, and these friars the tail. *Priests and deacons*, for the preaching of God's word and the administering of sacraments, with provision for the poor, are, indeed, grounded on God's law, but *these other sects* have no manner of support thence, as far as I have read.' About the year 1457, Reynold Peacocke, also bishop of Chichester, preached at St. Paul's Cross,[4] that the office of a christian prelate chiefly above all other things, is, to preach the word of God; that the riches of bishops by inheritance are the goods of the poor; that spiritual persons, by God's law, ought to have no temporal possessions. And, moreover, he wrote a book, De Ministrorum Æqualitate, wherein he maintained Wickliffe's opinion of the equality of ministers and bishops; for which, and other articles, he was accused and convicted of heresy.

The original constitution of the British churches was, therefore, presbyterian. And Augustine, in enforcing upon them the corruptions and fooleries of the Romish church, as the centuriators express it, *eas ecclesias magis deformavit quam recte instituit;* rather *deformed* than *reformed* them. But more than this. It is easy to prove, that all the orders, powers, jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical claims founded, as are those of the English prelatical and Romish churches, upon the acts of Augustine and his successors, are uncanonical, irregular, and void, both in the judgment of God and of the

1) Vaughan, 2, 155.

2) So wrote the archbishop of Canterbury to Pope Martin Clarke, ch. v.

3) Vaughan's Life of Wickliffe, 2, 372.

4) Fox, Acts and Monum. vol. i. pp. 929, 930. See also several other authorities given in Prynne's English Prelacy, 2, p. 346.

canon law. For, since the British church was a primitive church, deriving its orders from the eastern, and not from the western church, and since it was, therefore, protected in its liberties by many express canons, Augustine, or pope Gregory, or the Romish church, could possess no powers, nor exercise any functions, in this country. The canons also limit the authority of every bishop to his own diocese, and debar them the exercise of any function that pertains to another bishop.[1] Gregory, therefore, had no more jurisdiction over the British bishops, than the British bishops had over him.[2] It is thus apparent, that Augustine had no canonical mission *to* England, and it is also demonstrable, that he had no canonical consecration *within* it. As to his consecration, it remains a matter of great uncertainty, whether he was consecrated at Arles, or in Germany; but in either case, the bishops of these countries could have no canonical jurisdiction in England; and, therefore, they could impart none. And hence it follows, that Augustine's consecration, and all his subsequent acts, together with all the orders of our Anglican and Scottican prelatists were, and are, null and void. This conclusion is further enforced by the fact, that Augustine, contrary to all canonical rule, ordained other bishops alone, while the canons require the cooperation of three.[3] Finally, even could these invalidities be removed, it will be in evidence before the reader, that the English orders were, at a period *subsequent* to the time of Augustine, derived from Scottish and Irish presbyters, and that the whole chain of the Anglican prelatical succession hangs by the nail of the original British presbyterianism.[4]

## § 4. *The primitive churches in Ireland were presbyterian.*

In entering upon an exposition of the true character of the primitive church in Ireland, it is necessary to remark, that the Irish were always called Scoti, till the eleventh or twelvth century, and the country Scotia;[5] so that what relates to these must be regarded as illustrative of the history of Ireland. In the case of the church in Ireland, as in that of Britain,

1) See Canon, Apost. 27, 28; Nicene, 16, Sardican, 15.

2) See Du Pin's Eccl. Hist. vol. v. 93, Lond. 1693. See also Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. ch. v. and Usher's Relig. of the Anct. Irish and Brit. c. 8 and 9.

3) See Lect. on the Apost. Suc.

4) See this argument very ably presented in the Presb. Rev. April, 1842. Art. i.

5) Palmer's Orig. Lit. vol. i. p. 182; see a host of authorities produced by Mr. Stuart, in his learned History of Armagh.

much effort is made to obscure and darken the evidence of its true primitive character. Moore, on behalf of the Romish church, does not hesitate to assert, that christianity first reached Ireland through the agency of St. Patrick;[1] while prelatists, in order to shut out the light, as to the true character of the primitive church in Ireland, throw over the whole subject a veil of mystery.[2]

As to the reckless, and *truly Romish* assertion, of Moore, it is contradicted by St. Patrick and himself. In giving an account of the great successes of St. Patrick, in Connaught, Mr. Moore observes,[3] 'it is supposed, that to these western regions of Ireland the saint alludes, in his confession, where he stated, that he had visited remote districts, where no missionary had been before; an assertion important, as *plainly implying that*, in the more accessible parts of the country, christianity had, *before his time*, been preached and practiced.' Again, in his account[4] of the first efforts of pope Celestine, to relieve the wants of the Irish, and to appoint a bishop for the superintendence of their infant church,' he relates, that the person chosen for this mission 'to the Scots, believing in Christ, (for so it is specified by the chronicler,) was Palladius, a deacon of the Romish church.' Now, as this mission is confessedly 'to the Scots believing in Christ,' it is manifest, that there were christians in Ireland before it took place. Mr. Moore further teaches, that the Irish christians distinguished themselves, in the persons of Pelagius, Celestine, and other eminent scholars, who nevertheless preceded Patrick nearly a century; and that it was on account of the report of St. German and Lupus, of the increasing number of christians in Ireland, that Palladius was sent by pope Celestine.[6] And, in numerous other ways, when *it suits his purposes*, and his Romish prejudices, to speak the truth, this hired advocate of the papacy, who prostitutes to a sect the dignified character of a historian, falsifies his own assertion, and fully corroborates the truth of the early conversion of the Irish.[7]

It is probable,[8] that, in the very days of the apostles themselves, christianity had extended to some parts of this island, and had continued here till the time of Chrysostom, who, in demonstrating that Christ is God, says: 'the British isles, sit-

1) Hist. of Ireland.
2) Dr. Bowden, in Wks. on Episc. vol. i. p. 44.
3) P. 221, Mason's Prim. Ch. in Ireland, p. 4.
4) P. 209; in ibid, pp. 5, 6.
5) P. 209; pp. 8, 9.
6) Ibid.
7) See pp. 207, 208, 237, 238, 254, &c.; in ibid, pp. 11, 21, 22, 23, 113.
8) Hist. of Armagh, p. 612; App. No. xiii. pp. 613, 614; Disc. on the state of the Anct. Irish Ch.

uated beyond this sea, and which are in the very ocean, have perceived the power of the word; for even there churches are founded and altars erected.'[1] Again,[2] in his twenty-eighth sermon on the second epistle to the Cor. 12: 'into whatsoever church you should enter, whether among the Moors, or in those British *isles*,' &c. He further says, 'although thou shouldest go to the ocean, and those British isles, &c., thou shouldest hear all men, every where, discoursing matter out of the scriptures.'[3] The testimony of Tertullian, already adduced, and which asserts the christianized state of these islands, early in the third century, is believed rather to refer to Ireland than to England. Eusebius (Pamphili) says, in lib. iii. that some of the apostles had passed into the isles which we name Britannic; and hence Nicephorus alleges, that some of the apostles had selected Egypt and Syria, others the extreme regions of ocean, and the Britannic isles, for their pious missions. It is shown by Usher, that Mansu or Mansuetus, a Scot of Ireland, was converted and ordained by St. Peter the apostle, and in the year 66 made bishop of Toul, now Lorraine, where he died on the third of September, 105. Here he built and dedicated a church to St. Stephen.[5]

It is not necessary to inquire minutely into the exact time, when Christianity was first preached in Ireland. Suffice it, that it reached this country at a very early period. We find, that in the year 350, Elephinus, son of a Scoto-Hibernian king, suffered martyrdom, having been decapitated by order of the emperor Julian, who was enraged at this pious man for having baptized a number of his subjects. Rupert mentions, that the apostate himself was present at his execution.[6] In the fourth century it appears, that christian missionaries had here founded some churches and schools, and thus prepared the way for the more effectual preaching of St. Patrick. Ailbe, Declan, Ibar, and Kiaran, all natives of this country, were the immediate precursors of Palladius, who had preceded St. Patrick in his mission to Ireland.[7] Hence we may infer, that the religion of Jesus was systematically taught in this country in the fourth century. This is incontestably prov-

1) Op. tom. vi. ed. Sav. p. 635.

2) Op. tom. iii. 696, in Mason's Prim. Ch. in Irel. p. 21.

3) Op. tom. viii. p. 111.

4) See above and Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 74.

5) His biographer writes thus of him:

'Inclyta, Mansueto claris natalibus orti
Progenies titul's fulget in orbe suis,
Insula Christicolas gestabat Hibernia gentes
Unde genus traxit et satus inde fuit.'

6) Rupert in Vit. Elephii, cap. 12, apud Suriam, tom. 5, Oct. 16.

7) Vita Dec. vita Kiaran, Vita Alb. &c; Citante Usser, Brit. Eccl. Ant. p. 409.

ed by Jerome, who, speaking of Celestius says, 'he was made fat with Scottish flummery.'[1] Be this, however, as it may, St. Patrick was not sent to convert a nation altogether heathen. The venerable Bede says, that, in the eighth year of the emperor Theodosius, Palladius was sent by Celestine, bishop of the Roman church, to the *Scots believing in Christ;*[2] and Prosper, in his Chronicle ad Ann. page 431, testifies to the same effect. It is, therefore, beyond any reasonable doubt, that Ireland was very early christianized, certainly before the time fixed upon for the mission of St. Patrick. As to the existence and character of this renowned personage, much controversy has arisen. It is urged by many eminent writers, and by many most weighty reasons, that the whole history, miracles, mission, and acts of the Romish saint, are no more than one of the fabulous legends got up in the ninth century, for the purpose of advancing the cause of the papacy among an ignorant people.[3]

Perhaps the true solution of the difficulties presented by the case of St. Patrick, is that adopted by Dr. Brownlee and others, that while the Romish saint, St. Patrick, or, as Butler has it, 'Padraig,'[4] is a mere creature of the imagination, like many others in the calendar, and his whole history a fabrication, and an absurd and incredible legend, there was, nevertheless, a man named Succathers, born near Glasgow, at Kilpatrick, and a Roman citizen of noble family, and hence called Patricius, a nobleman, which was contracted into Patrick.[5] That this Patrick did labor among the inhabitants of Ireland, and that he did much towards spreading christianity in the country, we believe; but that he was ever at Rome, that he was related to St. Martin, that he was ordained bishop and afterwards archbishop by the pope, or that he introduced into Ireland the system of prelacy or popery, either as it regards church polity or doctrine, we do not believe. All this we regard as pure fiction, and based upon the contradictory fabrications of the inventors of such ready-made biographies.[6]

The forms and doctrines of the Irish christians were not derived from Rome, but from Gaul or Britain. 'It is likely,'

1) In Ledwich, p. 54.

2) Bed. Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 13.

3) See Dr. Ledwich's Antiq. of Ireland, pp. 58–69, and the authors he refers to. The subject is elaborately discussed by Mr. Stuart, in his History of Armagh, Introd. i. p. 70, where other authors also are named; Dr. Mason's Prim. Church in Ireland, pp. 14–16.

4) Lives of the Saints. Dublin. vol. i. p. 317.

5) St. Patrick. New York, 1841. p. 10.

6) See Ledwich as above, and at p. 61.

says Mr. Palmer, 'that any presbyters who may have come to Ireland during the first ages, were sent thither by the British church. Christianity had certainly penetrated into Ireland long before the time of Patrick,' . . . . and as there seems to be no authentic account of the original source from whence christianity had come to Ireland, the mere geographical position of that country, in relation to its sister island, would induce us to think that the former must have received religion and ecclesiastical rites from the latter.'[1] During the Diocletian persecution, Ireland would also afford a refuge to the British christians, who doubtless many of them flocked to that country. Either this was the case, or else Ireland received christianity from Gaul, as did Britain, since the forms, usages, and opinions of the two churches remarkably coincide, both differing from the Romish, and both harmonizing with the oriental churches. And as, in either case, the presbyterian character of the Irish churches is made out, we will advert to some proofs of this position.

This oriental origin of Irish christianity is found in the fact that, in their mode of celebrating Easter, in their mode of tonsure, in their offices, in their monastic rules, in their multiplication of bishops, and in other points, the Irish differed from the Romish church, and protested against its customs and doctrines, as intolerable and antichristian. Laurentius, the successor of Augustine the Monk, in his letter to the Scots in Ireland, about the year A. D. 604, 'acquaints them[2] what a great regard he had for the Britains, at his first arrival in the island, going upon the charitable presumption of their conformity to the catholic church; but, finding himself mistaken, he hoped the Scots were governed by more exact measures. But now he understood, by the bishop Daganus, who sailed into this island, and by the abbot Columbanus, whom he met with in France, that the churches of the Scots and Britains were perfectly alike. For Daganus, the bishop, at his coming hither, refused not only to eat with us,' says he, 'but would not so much as lodge in the same house.' By thus refusing to eat or to domesticate with the Romish missionaries, these Irish bishops, we must remember, were actually, according to the canons, declaring them to be excommunicate.'[3] The truth of this tradition[4] is very much confirmed by the argument of St. Colman, more especially as it appears

1) Palmer's Orig. Liturg. vol. i. p. 181.

2) Collier, Eccl. Hist. B. ii. cent. vii. vol. i. p. 80.

3) See quoted in Ledwich, p. 63.

4) Usher, Rel. of Anct. Irish, p. 93; and Mason's Prim. Chr. p. 17.

in the life of Wilfred, by two of his biographers. One of these relates, that St. Colman said thus, 'We, with the same confidence, celebrate the same as his disciples, Polycarpus and others, did; neither dare we, for our parts, neither will we, change this.' The other, Fridegodus, comes still closer to the point in these lines, describing the words of Colman, 'We hold by our country's course,' or usage, and not 'frivolous writings, such as was given by Polycarp, 'the disciple of St. John.''

Gennadius, who wrote before the year A. D. 493, uses very remarkable words, which at once prove the early conversion of Ireland, and the oriental source of its christianity.[1] It is also a curious fact, and one of some importance on this head, that the use of the Greek alphabet was employed in the writing of one of the most ancient books that we possess in Ireland, the book of Armagh. A further and striking proof of the eastern, and, consequently, the anti-Romish origin of the Irish church, and of its unquestionable presbyterianism,[2] appears to be the great multiplication of bishops in Ireland, since they changed and multiplied them at pleasure. Their number, says Dr. Ledwich, was prodigious. In like manner we read that St. Basil, in the fourth century, had fifty rural bishops in his diocese; and that there were five hundred sees in the six African provinces. This rule of the Irish church occasioned great animosity on the part of Rome. Anselm complains bitterly, that 'these bishops every where were elected and consecrated without a title, and by *one* bishop instead of three, which was according to the Roman plan.' No objection can be made to the testimony of St. Bernard and Anselm on this head, being Romanists themselves; but the truth of it does not depend on their statements alone. Virgil, and seven Irish bishops, went forth on a mission together to Germany, in the middle of the eighth century. In the seventh century they swarmed in Britain, as may be seen from Bede. In fact, the churches in Scotland and the north of England were regularly supplied with bishops and presbyters from the Irish church, and this was become so general that there could not be found three Romish bishops to consecrate Wilfred; all

1) Placuit nempe altissimo, ut S. Athanasius, ex Ægypto pulsus ab Arianis, vitam monasticam, usque ad id tempus in occidente ignominiosam; Scotis, Attacottis, aliisque barbaris Romanum imperium vastantibus; S. S. Ambrosio et Martino opem ferentibus; propalaret, ann. circ. 336. De Script. Ill. c. 44; O'Con. Proleg. i. 78; Dr. Mason's Prim. Chr. pp. 19, 20.

2) See these facts fully substantiated in Ledwich's Antiq. of Irel. pp. 81–83; they are also given in dean Murray's Hist. of the Cath. Ch. in Ireland.

being of Irish consecration, and natives of Ireland. In 670, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, decreed, that they who were consecrated by Irish or British bishops, should be confirmed anew by a catholic one. The fifth canon of the council of Ceale-hyth, in section 16, requires, 'that none of Irish extraction be permitted to usurp to himself the sacred ministry, in any one's diocese; nor let it be allowed such an one to touch any thing which belongs to those of the holy order; nor to receive any thing from them in baptism, or in the celebration of the mass; or that they administer the eucharist to the people, because we are not certain *how* or by *whom* they were ordained. We know how it is enjoined in the canons, that no bishop or presbyter invade the parish of another, without the bishop's consent, so much the rather should we refuse to receive the sacred ministrations from other nations, where there is no such order as that of metropolitans, nor any regard paid to other orders.' The Astmen, also, when they received the faith from Romanists, in the 9th century, would not suffer their bishops to be ordained by the Irish, but sent them to Canterbury.[1] Here we can trace, by collecting and comparing these facts, the steps taken by the ever-watchful jealousy of the church of Rome to suppress the Irish church, which had taken so deep a root at this time in England, and which was extending its influence to so many different parts of Europe, and also to transform presbyterian bishops, or pastors and itinerant missionaries, into hierarchical prelates. The fears of the Saxons were soon communicated to the continental clergy. The forty-second canon of Chalons, in section 13, forbids certain 'Irishmen, who gave themselves out to be bishops, to ordain priests or deacons, without the consent of the ordinary.' The same year, the council of Aix La Chapelle observes, 'that in some places were there Irish, who called themselves bishops, and ordained many improper persons, without the consent of their lords or of the magistrates.' These alarms could only have been excited by the number, zeal, and perseverance of the Irish presbyter-bishops, and the jealousy with which the Romish clergy regarded their exertions as a missionary church.

There is a very curious and authentic record preserved in Wilkin's Councils, which not only shows the number of Irish bishops, but also clearly proves their form of government to have been presbyterian in its principles. 'A. D. 1216. Constitutions made in the cathedral church of St. Peter's and St.

1) Ledwich, p. 95.

Paul's, of Newton, Athurny, by Simon Rochford, by the grace of God, bishop of Meath — Cardinal Paparo, legate of the sovereign pontiff Eugenius III,' having directed, in the third general council, held at Kells, in Meath, in the year 1152, among other salutary canons, 'that, on the death of a village bishop, or of bishops who possessed small sees in Ireland, rural deans should be appointed by the diocesans, to succeed them, who should superintend the clergy and laity in their respective districts, and that each of their sees should be erected into a rural deanery — we, in obedience to such regulations, do constitute and appoint, that, in the churches of Athurny, Kells, Slane, Skrine, and Dunshaughlin, being heretofore bishops's sees in Meath, shall hereafter be the heads of rural deaneries, with archpresbyters personally residing therein.' Here we have a clear and full development of the state of the ancient government, by these efforts to graft upon it the orders of the hierarchy; and a confirmation of what has been stated, namely, that Ireland was full of village bishops, who were certainly nothing but presbyterian pastors, and yet exercised all episcopal functions. Meath could boast of Clonard, Duleek, Trim, Ardbraccan, Dunshaughlin, Slane, Foure, Skrine, Mullingar, Loughseedy, Athunry, Ardmirchor, and Hallyloughort, Dullin, Swords, Lusk, Finglas, Newcastle, Tawney, Leixlip, Bray, Wicklow, Arklow, Ballymore, Clandalkin, Tallagh, and O'Murthy. These were all formerly rural sees. The transmutations, however, which commenced with the introduction of popery in 1152, proceeded very slowly, for, by bishop Rochfort's constitutions, it appears they were far from being completed in the thirteenth century. So powerfully did the primitive presbyterianism of the people resist all prelatical innovations.

The number of bishops at one time in Ireland, amounted, says Dr. Ledwich, to three hundred; every church had its own bishop.[1] And can any man, in his sober senses, pretend that these were diocesan prelates, or any other than presbyterian pastors of so many churches, many of them small and insignificant? Impossible. No reasonable man can avoid inferring from these facts, which are adduced by prelatists themselves, that the primitive government of the Irish churches was presbyterian, as its principles were protestant.[2] There is not a circumstance, says Dr. Ledwich, in our ecclesiastical polity, more strongly indicative of an eastern origin, than that now related. For Salmasius has evinced the apos-

1) Ibid, p. 84. 2) See Ledwich, p. 83.

tolic practice to be, to place bishops in every rural church, and in cities more than one. Hence the first obtained the name of chorepiscopus. St. Basil, in the fourth century, had fifty of these rural bishops in his diocese, which was probably one for each church. By the ancient discipline, the extension of christianity depended on their multiplication, for to them alone the great offices of religion were confined: they alone could execute them, and they alone preached in the African church in the fifth century. As the episcopal dignity was lessened in the public esteem by the number of village bishops, their ordination was restrained by the Antiochian, Ancyran, and other canons; in the Laodicean council their name was changed from chorepiscopus to periodeutes, or visiter-itinerant; he was, however, to be a priest, and to have the inspection of a certain number of churches and clergymen, thus giving him some distinction, to save appearances and prevent opposition. The archpresbyter, in the Roman church, was nearly such an officer as the periodeutes. About the time of the Norman conquest, the archpresbyter was called a rural dean. At this period, an old writer informs us, the see of Canterbury had a chorepiscopus, who dwelt in the church of St. Martin, without Canterbury. On the arrival of Lafranc, he was turned out, as we have heard the others were throughout England. As a municipal law hindered the operation of the canons here, and as no foreign power had as yet interfered, like the Anglo Saxons and Normans in England, either to compel the Irish to submission or conformity to them, they continued to preserve that plan of episcopacy (that is, of presbyterian episcopacy,) delivered to them and settled by the first preachers of the gospel, and which at length was most reluctantly relinquished. If any thing could be wanted to complete this proof, it is the fact, also given by Dr. Ledwich, that, as the island was divided into four provinces, there were in like manner four ministers appointed to '*preside*' over them. There *presidents* were called bishops, and not metropolitans. So that even these superintendents were chosen from among the other bishops or presbyters, and received no new title, nor, as far as we know, any second ordination.[1]

The next proof of the eastern origin of the Irish church, and its opposition to Rome, is derived from the circumstance, that the original practice of hereditary succession was firmly established in the primitive Irish church. St. Bernard, in his

1) See Ledwich, p. 79.

life of Malachy, complains of this custom, in the following words: 'A most pernicious custom had gained strength by a diabolical ambition of some men in power, who possessed themselves of bishoprics by hereditary succession; nor did they suffer any to be put in election for them, but such as were of their own tribe or family; and this kind of execrable succession made no small progress, for fifteen generations had passed over in this mischievous custom; and so far had this wicked and adulterous generation confirmed itself in this untoward privilege, that although it sometimes happened that clergymen of their family failed, yet bishops of it never failed; in fine, eight married men, and *not in orders*, though men of learning, were predecessors of Celsus in Armagh. The first twenty-seven bishops of Ross Carbery were of the family of St. Fachen, its first prelate. To this we may add that Columba, founder of the celebrated Culdean monastery at Iona, being of the Tyrconnelian blood, the abbots his successors were of the same race. Hereditary succession became a fixed municipal law, and pervaded church and state, and hence the struggle in the See of Armagh, to which Malachy O'Morgan was appointed in 1129, to the exclusion of the old family; which had nearly proved fatal to him, and called forth the warm resentment of St. Bernard, his friend. It further appears, that after the consolidation of Glendalough with Dublin, in 1152 and 1179, the Tooles, the original proprietors, still obtained the title and presentation until 1497. 'On the whole,' says Dr. Ledwich,[1] 'it may safely be affirmed, that every mother church, and there were none others in early ages, had a bishop; that inferior toparchs and small towns, as Dublin, confined to a few acres within its walls, erected sees; add to these the number generated, if I may say so, by the exercise of metropolitan power, altogether made so many of the episcopal order as would be, if not so well authenticated, utterly incredible.'

'From this it seems evident that our bishops and clergy were married men, till the introduction of popery in the twelfth century; and to this St. Bernard refers, when he says, 'they were a wicked and adulterous generation.'

Again, the ancient formularies of the Irish church agreed with the Greek, and manifestly differed from the Roman, in the communion service, in the prophetical lessons, in the sermon and offices after it, and in various other particulars. 'The Irish,' we are told by St. Bernard, in his Life of Mala-

1) P. 84.

chy, 'rejected auricular confession, as well as authoritative absolution.' They confessed to God alone, as believing 'God alone could forgive sins.' They would neither give to the church of Rome the tenths nor the first-fruits, nor would they be legitimately married; that is, according to the forms insisted on by the Romish church. Before the council of Cashel, convened by Henry the Second, in 1172, marriage was regarded as a civil rite, and was performed by the magistracy; at that council, the priests were authorized to perform the ceremony, and therefore we find the ancient Irish christians denounced 'as schismatics and heretics,' by St. Bernard; and as being in reality 'pagans, while calling themselves christians.' These partial formularies, however, had no resemblance to prelatical liturgies. There is nothing like a liturgy remaining, which can date its origin within any very early age. Neither were these forms binding on the churches. They were made and unmade by each bishop, or pastor. This is the testimony of the historian, Gordon. Of the ancient Irish church, he says, 'It maintained not a uniformity of worship. Almost every diocese had a particular liturgy; and even the several congregations were frequently found to differ in rites, modes, and offices, of public devotion.'[1] They were also very various. Among others, who have unwittingly substantiated these views, we may mention Gillebert, the pope's legate, and bishop of Limerick, who, in the eleventh century, wrote what he calls 'the canonical custom of performing the offices of the whole ecclesiastical order,' in which he informs those for whom they were prepared, that it was 'to the end that those different and schismatical orders, by which almost all Ireland was deluded, might give place to one catholic and Roman office.'[2]

But still further, the eastern origin and the certain presbyterianism of the Irish churches, is proved from the fact that their bishops or pastors were elected by the people;[3] were supported by the voluntary contributions of the people, and not by tithes;[4] and were ordained, many of them, *sine titulo*, to itinerate and missionate though the unsupplied regions of

1) Gordon's Hist. of Ireland, vol. i. p. 53.

2) Mr. Palmer, in his Origines Liturgicæ, in reference to the liturgical books of the Anglo-Saxon church, vol. i. p. 186, says, 'As, however, each bishop had the power of making some improvements in the liturgy of his church, in process of time different customs arose, and several became so established as to receive the names of their respective churches. Thus, gradually, the 'uses,' or customs of York, Sarum, Hereford, Bangor, Lincoln, Aberdeen, &c. came to be distinguished from each other.

3) Ledwich, pp. 81, 85.

4) Ibid, p. 85.

country.[1] Nay, more, to make the picture a still more striking likeness, we are informed, that these ancient Irish churches were modelled, like all other apostolical churches, after the Jewish synagogue. Hence, as all synagogues had schools connected with them, they formed seminaries for the instruction and preparation of the ministry.[2] Hence, too, the individual who presided over these communities of presbyters was denominated abbot, or doctor, just as the ancient Jewish presidents were called by these names.[3] This is the common title, says Ware, of 'most of the ancient Irish prelates.'[4] And 'the title of bishop was less honorable than that of abbot, to whom (though he was a presbyter, or a layman) the bishop was sometimes subordinate.'[5] Still more. Like all modern presbyterian churches, with a small exception, these ancient Irish churches employed in their psalmody, not only the ancient psalms, but also modern hymns, expressive of scriptural and devotional sentiments.[6] Like them, too, they were the patrons of a learned, as well as a pious ministry. They poured out their wealth in the endowment of their theological seminaries, and the gratuitous support of students. They made their country illustrious throughout the world, as the island of saints, and the light of other lands. They gave missionaries, scholars, and professors, to Europe. Claudius Sedulius, Johannes Scotus Erigena, Armachanus, and a host of others, shone forth as stars of the first magnitude. The Irish church was also eminently and essentially a missionary church.[7]

And to crown all. While it is alleged, that the most illustrious and ancient order of catholic saints was that begun in the time of St. Patrick, these are described as having one head, which is Christ; one leader who was St. Patrick; and one tonsure; and they did not reject the attendance and company of women. These continued from A. D. 433 to A. D. 534. And 'ALL THE SAINTS OF THIS CLASS WERE BISHOPS (that is, presbyter-bishops); THEIR NUMBER THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY.'[8] If, therefore, any point touching such ancient times can be regarded as susceptible of proof, it is, that the ancient Irish churches were in their origin oriental, and not Romish; in their principles, protestant; and in their ecclesiastical views and forms essentially presbyterian. 'O'Hal-

1) Ledwich, pp. 59, 75.
2) Ibid, p. 89, where see authority.
3) Abba, or father, see ibid.
4) In ibid.
5) Ibid, p. 98.
6) Ibid, p. 92.
7) Ibid, p. 95, &c. Stuart's Hist. of Armagh.
8) Ibid, p. 96.

loran himself,' says Mr. Stuart,[1] 'roundly asserts, that before, during, and for two centuries after the death of St. Patrick, the Irish churches adhered most strictly to the Asiatic churches, in their modes of discipline.[2]

Nor can it be doubted, that they continued to maintain their protest against the abominations of Rome until the twelfth century. The letter of Henry, to pope Adrian the fourth, is conclusive evidence on this subject. In that letter, he alleged, 'that as the Irish were *schismatics* and *bad christians*, it was necessary to reform them, and oblige them to own the papal authority, which *they had hitherto disregarded*, and that the most probable means was, to bring them into subjection to the crown of England,' which, he says, 'had ever been devoted to the holy see.' In the bull issued by this pope, A. D. 1156, he says,[3] 'your highness' desire of extending the glory of your name on earth, and of obtaining the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, is laudable and beneficial: inasmuch as your intent is, as a catholic prince, to enlarge the limits of the church; to declare the truth of the christian faith to untaught and rude nations, and to eradicate vice from the field of the Lord.' Hence, to use the words of bishop Burgess, — 'this curious and important document contains indisputable evidence, that popery was not the ancient religion of the Irish — was not the religion of Ireland before the middle of the twelfth century.' And as the best evidence that can be adduced is that of an enemy, we may also mention that furnished by Bede, from whom we learn, that pope Honorius, when using the strongest argument he could devise, in order to induce the Irish church to submit to the Roman see, exhorted them, 'not to esteem their own small number wiser than all the rest of the world; hereby admitting, in the strongest possible way, their estrangement from, and entire disagreement with, the see of Rome. The early Irish christians did not believe in the efficacy of prayers to saints and angels. They neither prayed to dead men, nor *for* them, nor was the service for the dead ever used by the Irish church, till they were obliged to attend to it by the council of Cashel, as may be seen by a reference to the proceedings of that convention.

That the doctrine of transubstantiation was not held by the early church of Ireland, is evident by the reception which

1) Hist. of Armagh, p. 623.

2) The Irish church also resembled the early Greek and eastern churches, in rites and discipline. Gordon's Hist. of Ireland, vol. i. p. 53, and in the small extent of its episcopates. Ibid, p. 55.

3) See Rapin's Hist. of Engl. Hume, on Leland's Hist. of Ireland.

it received, on its being first promulgated by several Irish divines, among others, by the justly celebrated Johannes Scotus Erigena, so highly esteemed at the court of Charles the Bald, for his learning and piety, and whose book was condemned by the pope and the council of Versailles, as the only way they could confute it. Previously to this the Irish received the Lord's supper in both kinds, and they called it 'the communion of the body and blood of their Lord and Saviour.' In their places of worship, they had no images nor statues; on the contrary, their use was not only expressly condemned, as we learn from Sedulius, one of their early divines, but mentioned also by others of them, 'as heathenish and idolatrous.' So far were the early Irish christians from believing in purgatory, that, until the period of Henry and Adrian's usurpation, the word does not appear to have been known to the Irish writers. That a number of the ceremonies of the Romish church, such as attending to canonical forms, singing in choirs, the use of the consecrated chrism in baptism, the sacrifices of the mass, and the dispensing of indulgences, were unknown, or at least unpracticed in Ireland, until the period referred to, is matter of undoubted historical record; the circumstances being alluded to by various Romish writers, who complain of the stubbornness and heretical feeling of the Irish, on these points, and who have happily furnished the most undoubted evidence as to the comparative purity of the church they so fiercely endeavor to malign. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, in the twelfth century, declares, that even the Irish 'bishops were every where elected,' and he pitifully regrets that they had not yet received even the pall from Rome.[1] That they were thoroughly protestant in all points of essential doctrine has been most fully and repeatedly shown. And that their presbyterian principles continued to manifest themselves even after their subjection to Rome, appears from the sentiments already adduced from Johannes Scotus Erigena,[3] and from Armachanus;[2] and from the fact, that, at the reformation, the Irish clergy were the most anxiously bent on introducing puritanism, both in doctrine and discipline.[4]

As to the idea, that any prelatical succession can be made out in Ireland, it is enough, in order to show its absurdity, to produce the statement of Sir James Ware, in his Prelates of

1) Mason's Prim. Chr. p. 45.—Usher's Anct. Irish, p. 96.
2) Ibid and Usher, passim.
3) See B. ii.
4) See Dr. Taylor's Rom. Biog. of the Age of Elizab. The Articles of the Irish Church. Usher's Wks. &c.

Ireland,[1] in reference to the See of Armagh. 'Celsus, being near his death, was solicitous that Malachy Morgair, then bishop of Connor, should succeed him, and sent his staff to him as his successor. Nor was he disappointed, for Malachy succeeded him, though not immediately, 'for one Maurice, son of Donald, a person of noble birth, for five years, (says the same Bernard,) by secular power, held that church in possession, not as a bishop, but as a tyrant; for the ambition of some in power, had, at that time, introduced a diabolical custom of pretending to ecclesiastical sees, by hereditary succession; not suffering any bishops but the descendants of their own family. *Nor was this kind of execrable succession of short continuance;* for fifteen generations (or successions of bishops, as Colgan has it) had succeeded in that manner; and so far had that evil and adulterate generation confirmed the wicked course, that sometimes, *though clerks of their blood might fail, yet bishops never failed.* In fine, eight married men, and without orders, though scholars, were predecessors to Celsus, from whence proceeded that general dissolution of ecclesiastical discipline, (whereof we have spoken largely before,) that contempt of censures, and decay of religion, throughout Ireland.' Thus Bernard. The names of those eight married men, unordained, Colgan delivers in the place above cited.' (Bishops of Armagh, p. 9.) If such irregularities occurred in the primate's see, we may conclude, that it would be somewhat difficult to trace the succession in other dioceses, where Sir James Ware has not been able to ascertain even the names of the bishops for centuries together. (See his 'Bishops of Rapho.') To this we must add the positive assertion of Prosper, in his Chronicle, that Palladius was the first bishop of the Irish, '*primus episcopus.*' That this testimony is utterly destructive to the hopes of prelatists, is manifest, from the attempts to set it aside. Dr. Mason, after archbishop Usher, would, therefore, have us believe, that by primus is to be understood *primate* or *archbishop*;[1] and yet, he himself shows, that such a thing as archbishop was not found in Ireland till the eight century, while every tyro knows, that *primus* means first.

The proof being thus incontestable for the anti-Romish origin and character of the Irish church, since we have admitted the real existence of St. Patrick, we must conclude, that he had no connection with Rome. To establish this point, says Dr. Phelan,[2] it will be necessary to review two classes of authorities; the one, Romish documents, in which, as Ledwich

1) In Presb. Def. p. 69.
2) Prim. Chr. in Ireland, p. 6. In dean Murray's Hist. of the Catholic Ch. in Ireland.

observed, the name of Patrick is suspiciously omitted; the other, Irish documents, which have been adduced on the opposite side, and which, as they are decisive for the existence of our saint, so are they equally decisive against his *Roman* mission. To begin with Romish documents, Patrick is not mentioned in the Chronicle of Prosper. Prosper published his Chronicle many years after the time of Patrick. He was disposed to do full justice to the spiritual achievements of the pontiff, yet he does not mention Patrick. Palladius, as I said before, came to Ireland, stayed a few weeks, built three chapels, and ran away; but because Palladius was sent by Celestine, Prosper has commemorated the brief and ignoble effort. On the other hand, when Prosper published the last edition of his Chronicles, Patrick had been twenty-three years in Ireland, and his ministry had been blessed with the most signal success. What could have been the reason that he was omitted by Prosper. The venerable Bede agrees with Prosper in the mention of Palladius, and the omission of Patrick. Bede was strongly attached to the see of Rome, and though he speaks in liberal and grateful terms of the Irish, he seldom forgets to qualify his praise by some slight censure on their schismatical discipline.'

'But let us pass on to Irish writers, especially to Patrick's own confession. We learn from this document, 'that Patrick was born in Britain, and educated in Gaul; that some time after his return home, he felt an impulse to preach the gospel in Ireland; that he was consecrated at home, and that he proceeded immediately to the scene of his ministry. During the remainder of his life, he considered himself fixed in Ireland by the inviolable bonds of duty; but occasionally the high resolves of the apostle were weakened by the natural yearnings of the man. I wished, he says, to go to Britain, my native country, and to my parents; nay, also, to go to Gaul, to visit my brethren, and to see the face of the holy ones of my Lord; God knows I wished it very much; but I was detained by the Spirit, denouncing to me, that if I did so, I should be regarded as an offender. I fear to lose the labors which I have sustained; yet not I, but the Lord Christ, who has commanded me to abide for the remainder of my life with those among whom I have come.' He desires to visit Britain and his parents — Gaul and his spiritual brethren; but of Italy or the pope, there is no mention. The elder Cumian, the disciple and biographer of Columba, who wrote at the close of the sixth, or the beginning of the seventh century, calls Patrick *the first apostle of Ireland*. Thus it ap-

pears, that while the papal writers make Palladius the *first* apostle, and take no notice of Patrick, the Irish make Patrick the *first*, and take no notice of Palladius. The hymn of Fiech, of the same antiquity, also opposes the Roman hypothesis. In the first four stanzas we have the parentage of the apostle, his captivity, and flight from Ireland; then the story proceeds as follows:—

> He traversed the whole of Albion,
> He crossed the sea: it was a happy voyage:
> And he took up his abode with German,
> Far away to the south of Armorica,
>
> Among the isles of the Tuscan sea.
> There he abode, as I pronounce.
> He studied the canons with German;
> Thus it is that the churches testify.
>
> To the land of Erin he returned,
> The angels of God inviting him:
> Often had he seen in visions,
> That he should come once more to Erin.

'Here the route of the apostle is traced for us with the accuracy of a map — from Ireland, through Britain, across the channel, through Armorica, to the southeast corner of Gaul, on the coast of which are situated Lerins, and some other islands, the seats, in those days, of collegiate institutions. When his studies are concluded, he is brought back to Ireland, and through the sequel of the poem he is represented as continuing there for the remainder of his life. Through the whole piece, Italy is omitted: and, in a narrative so orderly and circumstantial as this is, *omission* is equivalent to exclusion.'

'I now come to the Cottonian MS. This very curious and important document concurs entirely with the hymn of Fiech. It makes him a student of Lerins. It says, that the bishops German and Lupus nurtured him in sacred literature; that they ordained him, and made him the chief bishop of their school among the Irish and Britons. On the subject of the Roman mission of Patrick, these documents maintain a profound and eloquent silence; a direct contradiction to the hypothesis we cannot expect from them, without ascribing to their authors the gift of prophecy; but they do what is equivalent, — they *leave no room for it*. They give us all the particulars of which we could reasonably expect to be informed; they tell us both the place of his birth and education; they state who instructed him, who ordained him, who sent him to preach in Ireland, and, finally, they show, that after the commencement of his ministry, he never left the

island. On the other hand, it has appeared, that the adherents of Rome are as silent concerning Patrick, as Patrick and his disciples are with respect to Rome.'

'How, then, is the Roman hypothesis sustained, by the learned and zealous writers of whom I speak? They take refuge in those obscure and recent legends which they are ashamed to quote, when maintaining the existence of Patrick, and which, on every other occasion, they reject with a contempt as undisguised as it is unmerited; and yet, after all, they cannot agree. Drs. Milner and O'Conor assert, that Patrick was ordained by Celestine; Dr. Lanigan, after, as he declares, the labor and close application of many years, after having collated every tract that he could meet with, gives the ordination to an unknown bishop of an unknown place! Again, Dr. O'Conor thinks himself very safe, when he states that Patrick was not at Rome earlier than the year 402, but Dr. Lanigan will not allow him to have been there for twenty-nine years after. Still further, Dr. Milner says, that in the year 461, Patrick went to Rome to render an account of his ministry to the pope; the Irishmen, more candid or more wary than their fellow-laborer, reject the account as 'a fable.' In fine, except upon the one indispensable point, these learned men oppose each other with as little ceremony as they controvert Dr. Ledwich, and in that particular they reverse the natural order of evidence, they assume that Patrick *must have had* a commission from Rome, and then they conjecture *when* and *how* he obtained it. Instead of deriving their hypothesis from facts, they rest their facts upon an hypothesis.'[1]

1) See also Dr. Mason's Primit. Christ. in Ireland. — Equally absurd is the alleged Romish mission of Kiaran, Declan, Ailbe, and Ibar, who are reputed to have resided at Rome nine years, and then to have been consecrated bishops. But this legend contains evidence of its own fabrication. What is alleged was impossible. 'For if,' says Dr. Ledwich, (p. 57,) 'these precursors of St. Patrick ever existed, and lived no longer than the rest of mankind, their age will be found posterior instead of being prior to that of our apostle, who, it is said, was sent hither, A. D. 432. Now the annals of Ulster and Innisfallen, as cited by Ware, placed the death of Ibar in 500, that of Ailbe in 527, of Declan later, and Kiaran, at an advanced age, was disciple of St. Finian, of Clonard, about 520. If we reject these authorities, we bestow on these precursors a longevity beyond verisimilitude; if we adopt them, the legend is more than doubtful. These teachers, we are told, travelled to Rome, and there received ordination. This is incredible, because Bede is an unexceptionable evidence, that our hierarchy was exactly similar to the British, and that we know was independent. Independent, for the British prelates nobly opposed the usurpation of Augustine, sent by pope Gregory, and refused obedience to a foreign jurisdiction, consequently they would not receive ordination from the hands of strangers.'

The Romish mission and character of St. Patrick being thus disposed of, we can have little difficulty in setting aside his alleged archbishopric. This is affirmed in the canons edited among his works. But Mr. Moore himself allows,[1] that 'it was not till the beginning of the *eighth* century, that the title of archbishop was known in Ireland.' This title originated with the establishment of christianity by Constantine. At the Ephesine council[2] in 431, Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, and Celestine, bishop of Rome, were publicly honored with this style. Before Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, enjoyed this title in 673, it was unknown in Britain; and Mabillon is confident, that few claimed or assumed it before the ninth century. Neither was St. Patrick a prelate.[3] 'If,' asks Dr. Ledwich, 'St. Patrick received his mission from pope Celestine, his orders in the church of Rome were graced with the archiepiscopal dignity, formed an hierarchy and established rites and ceremonies from Roman originals, as all his biographers boast, can the utmost stretch of human ingenuity assign a reason, why Cogitosus, Adamnan, Cumian, and Bede, have passed over these interesting particulars unnoticed?' And that these circumstances afforded strong presumptive proof against the prelatic character of the saint, is admitted by his warm and zealous defender, Mr. Stuart.[4] 'Now,' adds he, 'whatever negative argument against the *episcopal dignity* of St. Patrick may be deduced from the silence of Adamnan, Cumian, and Bede, on *that subject*,' it does not, he thinks, disprove his actual existence. So that, even on prelatical evidence and decision, St. Patrick was not a prelate.

It is, therefore, very important to consider the form of ecclesiastical polity introduced by Patrick, or Patricius. He was, indeed, a bishop, and he appointed also many other bishops. This we do not deny. The mere fact of a primitive episcopacy, we never questioned. And that, very early, presiding presbyters were regularly appointed, to whom the name of bishop came to be more exclusively applied, this we also grant. But all this might be, and yet presbyterianism — which maintains the essential equality of ministers as to order — exist. All this might be, and yet prelacy, which maintains the essential distinction of the three orders of ministers, be unknown. What, then, is it possible for us to know, were the sentiments of St. Patrick on this subject?

1) P. 224, in Dr. Mason's Pr. Ch. p. 33.
2) Dr. Ledwich, p. 65.
3) In Stuart's Hist. of Armagh. Intr. p. xviii.
4) Ibid.

'St. Patrick,' says Mr. Stuart,[1] 'seems to have exercised a kind of patriarchal power in this infant church. He is stated to have ordained three hundred and sixty-five bishops, and three thousand presbyters, and to have founded three hundred and sixty-five churches. It is manifest, that such a multitude of prelates could not have been of the nature of *diocesan* bishops; and it is probable that one of these dignified ecclesiastics was allotted by him TO EACH CHURCH. It is, indeed, by no means unlikely, that they officiated in their respective churches, at stated times, and occasionally acted *as itinerant preachers*, diffusing the light of the gospel from district to district, like their great preceptor, Patrick. A populous nation, from which heathenism was not yet effectually banished, required active and intelligent missionaries of this nature. Besides these, the church of Ireland seems to have acknowledged a species of auxiliary bishop, denominated Comorban, Combarbo, or Cobhanus. Some etymologists assert, that this name was synonymous with 'partner' or 'joint tenant;' and that he who possessed the office acted during the life of the principal ecclesiastic, to whom he was attached as his suffragan and assistant bishop. The bishops of Armagh had various comorbans, many of whose names are recorded in Ware's and in Colgan's elaborate works. It is probable, that many of the three hundred and sixty-five bishops ordained originally by St. Patrick, were of the order of comorbans, &c.: at once coadjutors, suffragans, and successors elect to their principals.'

Nothing could be more satisfactory than this proof of the certain presbyterianism of the churches and bishops founded by St. Patrick. For while, as Nennius reports, Patrick himself founded[2] three hundred and sixty-five bishoprics or churches, yet afterwards the number increased, says Bernard; so that, when Malachias went into Ireland, (nearly six hundred years after Patrick,) Ann. 1150, bishops were so multiplied, that one diocese was not content with one bishop, but almost every parish church had its bishop.[3] 'Yea, there was not only one bishop in such a little precinct, but more than one;[4] not only in cities, but even in villages, as Lafranc writes to Terlagh, then king in Ireland, *in villis vel civitatibus plures ordinantur.*'[5] 'And their revenue,' adds this learned author,

1) Hist. of Armagh, ut supra, pp. 615, 618.

2) Clarkson's Primit. Episcop. p. 40.

3) Bernard, Vit. Malach.

4) Usher's Disc. on the Relig. of the Anct. Irish, ch. viii.

5) Baron, ad an 1089, n. 16; Ush. Relig. of Irish, c. 8, p. 79.

· was answerable, since some of them, as Dr. Heylin tells us, had no other than the pasture of two milch beasts.'[1] This last statement is confirmed by the fact, that, at the council of Nice,[2] the three delegates from Britain were constrained, through their poverty, to accept the public allowance in lodging and food, provided by the emperor. That St. Patrick was not regarded by the ministers in Ireland as having any prelatical authority or office, is further demonstrated by this historical report, that when he came among them, 'he was told by St. Ibar, that they never acknowledged the supremacy of a foreigner.'[3]

ST. PATRICK, THEREFORE, WAS NOT A PAPIST, that is, A ROMAN CATHOLIC, NOR A PRELATIST, BUT A PRESBYTERIAN AND A PROTESTANT. NEITHER POPERY NOR PRELACY ARE THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT IRISH. Ireland is consecrated by the genius of a true, primitive, apostolical presbyterianism. Popery in that country is only six hundred and sixty-three years old, and the despotism of a foreign usurping bishop was then first imposed upon her reluctant and down-trodden children. Alas! how fallen, how degraded, how enslaved are her noble offspring. 'Sons of Ireland!' to reëcho the stirring words of one of her own sons, 'Awake from your fatal sleep! Awake to a sense of your spiritual rights, and liberties! The God of your primitive fathers, who guided, protected, and blessed Ireland during the first *twelve* centuries, calls on you, and commands you to awake from your fatal sleep! The God of your primitive christian fathers, who gave poor bleeding Ireland over, in his wrath, for her sins, into the hands of the cruel pope of Rome and Henry II, now calls on you to rouse up! Are not the long and mournful years of your captivity, of your *Babylonish captivity*, at last come to an end? By the memory of your dear native land — poor, bleeding Ireland! and by the memory of the pure ancient christian church of your fathers! and by the memory of the unnumbered saints who sleep in the bosom of Ireland, before popery had ever polluted her soil! By all that is solemn, and all that is awful in time, and in eternity, I beseech you, shake off the yoke of popery, and the Roman catholic despotism, which neither you, nor your fathers, could bear! If you have the blood of the primitive Irish and Culdees in your veins! If you have the zeal and patri-

1) Cosmogr. p. 342.
2) Stillingfl. pp. 47–109; Lond. Prot. Jour. 1832, p. 253, in Dr. Brownlee, p. 13.
3) Lond. Prot. Journ. ibid, p. 199, in ibid, p. 22.

otism of St. Cathaldus, and Cormac, and St. Albe, and St. Dermit, and St. Ibar, and St. Patrick, in your souls; if you have a spark of ancient Irish piety, honor, and patriotism, arise in your strength; break asunder the chains of popery, priestcraft, and despotism, and dash them from you! Down with the ghostly tyranny of the Italian despot! What right has a wretched Roman priest, at Rome, to lord it over Irishmen, and over American citizens? The watchword is — CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERTY FOR EVER! DOWN WITH POPERY, PRIESTCRAFT, AND TYRANNY! DOWN WITH ST. PADRAIG! BLESSED BE THE MEMORY OF ST. PATRICK FOR EVER!'

# CHAPTER II.

## THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY CONTINUED.

### § 1. *The primitive churches in Scotland were presbyterian.*

Scotland was, at an early period, chosen as the field of missionary effort. Apart from all conjecture, and independently of mere traditionary evidence, we have reason to believe that before the second century had run its round, the religion of the Cross had gained a hold among not a few of the inhabitants of that portion of the isles of the west. Buchanan was led to the opinion that Donald I. who reigned about the beginning of the third century, first received the christian religion.[1] Spotswood is of the same opinion, saying, 'the christian religion was first publicly received A. D. 203.' He adds, 'yet was not that the first time when Christ was here made known. I verily think that under Domitian's persecutions, some of John's disciples first preached the gospel in this kingdom. . . . . Sure not long after the ascension of our Lord, at least when the apostle St. John yet lived, the faith of Christ was known and embraced in divers places of this kingdom.'[2] With this account, of a very early proclamation of the gospel in Caledonia, Buchanan concurs. 'The Scots,' says he, 'were taught christianity by the disciples of the apostle John;' and 'many christians of the Britons, fearing the cruelty of Domitian, took their journey into Scotland: of whom many, famous both in learning and integrity of life, stayed and fixed their habitation therein.'[3] Tertullian declares, that in his day the gospel had pierced into all parts of the world, and even as far as to Britain, and to those parts of Britain to which the Roman arms and strength had never

1) Hist. of Scotland, B. iv. § 27, vol. i. p. 191.

2) Alexander Henderson's Review and Consid. p. 392.

3) Hist. of Scotland, lib. iv. and v.

advanced.[1] Tertullian would here seem to allude to that part of Britain which lay beyond the trench or wall erected by the Roman emperors, Hadrian, Antoninus, Pius, and Severus, that is, to Scotland,

Roma sagitifferis prætendit mænia Scotis.

Christianity, therefore, was very probably made known and to some extent diffused in Scotland, in the second century. It was, however, the ninth persecution under Aurelian, and the tenth, under Dioclesian, which brought into Scotland, from divers provinces of the empire, many men of God, famous for learning and piety, by which a more general christianization of Scotland appears to have been effected.[2] The time of our conversion to the faith, is, therefore, says bishop Burnet, reckoned to have been A. D. 263.[3] Certain it is, that christianity was generally professed in Scotland, in A. D. 431; since we find Celestine, bishop of Rome, sending Palladius on a spiritual embassy, 'to the Scots believing in Christ,' for that this refers to the Scoti, both in Ireland and Caledonia, is made manifest by the fact, that Palladius did visit the former, and died in Scotland, at Fordoun in the Mearns.[4] St. Patrick, also, who arrived in Ireland about the same period, is believed, upon strong reasons, to have been a native of Scotland, and to have brought his type of christianity from that country.[5] In the year A. D. 563, the celebrated abbey, or rather theological college, was founded in Scotland, by Columba, at Iona, which continued to flourish for ages, as the light of that western world, and to supply with ministers of the gospel both Scotland and England. But of this we shall have occasion to speak fully hereafter.

From the evidence thus adduced, it is incontrovertibly plain, that Scottish christianity was planted and had grown up to a large and spreading tree, ages before the time when Rome claims to have imparted it. Between the christians of Scotland and the emissaries and adherents of Rome, there continued to be the most uncompromising opposition, both as it regards doctrine and order, for many centuries. Rather than yield to the Romish corruptions, many of these men of God abandoned their property and their homes, and became exiles for conscience sake. In the 7th century Clement and

1) Lib. contr. Ind. 'et Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vere subdita.'

2) Causa Episcopatus Hierarch. Lucifuga. Edinb. 1706, pp. 96, 97.

3) Vind. of the Ch. of Scotland, App. p. 33. See also Vidal's Mosheim, vol. iii. p. 6.

4) Jamieson's Hist. Culd. p. 9.

5) Hetherington's Hist. Ch. of Scotland, pp. 8, 9.

Samson sharply rebuked a Romish emissary, of the name of Boniface, declaring, 'that he and his associates made it their only work and design to seduce the people of God from their obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, and draw them to the servitude of the bishop of Rome.'[1] In the eighth century Alcuinus, Rabanus Maurus, Johannes Scotus, and Claudius Clemens did also detect and rebuke the growing corruptions of the Romish hierarchy. The churches of Scotland and Ireland were protestant ten centuries before the reformation, and accorded, in all doctrinal points, with the churches of the reformation.[3]

The form of church government and polity, adopted by the primitive church in Scotland, was presbyterian. This follows from the oriental origin to which it has been distinctly traced, for the same reasons as authenticate the eastern source of British and of Irish christianity.[4] Boethius asserts, that the first government of our church was after the method, and conformable to the example, of the church of Alexandria,'[5] which we have already seen was most essentially presbyterian. Indeed, it would appear to have been the chief design with which Palladius was sent to Scotland, that he might introduce a prelatical form of government among the Scottish and Irish christians, since it is scarcely possible that the Pelagian heresy could have made any extensive progress in these countries at that time.[6] He is expressly denominated 'their first bishop,' '*primus episcopus*.'[7] Bishop Burnet allows, that 'Palladius is reckoned the first bishop.'[8] 'Palladius,' says Buchanan, 'is judged the first that set up bishops in Scotland: for, until that time, the churches were governed without bishops, though with less external pomp and splendor, yet with more simplicity and holiness.'[9] Palladius, says Boethius, 'was the first that exercised holy magistracy, (prelacy,) among the Scots, being, by the pope, created bishop.'[10] 'Before Palladius,' says Johannes Major, 'the

1) Causa Episcop. Hier. &c. ibid, p. 98.

2) Ibid.

3) See Usher's Discourse on the religion of the ancient Irish. That the church of Scotland was independent of the Church in England, as late as the twelfth century, is demonstrably plain; see Hist. of the Ch. of Scotl. vol. i. pp. 35, 36. So also the independence of the Irish church, as late as 1152, is urged by Mr. Palmer. On the Ch. vol. i. p. 549.

4) See above, ch. i.

5) Scot. Hist. lib. vi.

6) Hetherington's Hist. Ch. of Scotl. p. 8.

7) Usher, Primord. p. 801, Jamieson's Hist. of the Culdees, pp. 7, 8.

8) Observations on the 1st Canon, p. 33.

9) Hist. of Scotl. lib. iii.

10) Scot. Hist. lib. vii. in Causa Episcop. &c. p. 97.

Scotch were nourished in the faith by presbyters and monks, without bishops.'[1] 'The Scots,' says Fordoun, in his Chronicle, 'before the coming of Palladius, had presbyters only, for their instructors in the faith and administrators of sacraments.'[2] So irresistible is the evidence on this subject, that even the Romish annalist Baronius, under the year A. D. 404, admits, 'that the Scots received their first bishop from pope Celestine,'[3] and the venerable Bede also testifies, 'that Palladius was sent to the Scots, as their first bishop, from Celestine, the pope of Rome.'[4] Stillingfleet authenticates the conclusion of previous inquirers, and is of opinion that the Scots and Goths had no bishop.[5]

Neither is this most plain and positive testimony, to the original presbyterianism of the church of Scotland, opposed by any contrary evidence. No succession of prelates prior to the time spoken of, nor for a long time after, can be shown, or is even pretended. Nor does any historian attempt to trace regular dioceses higher up than the eleventh century.[6] The most baseless *assumption* of the existence of an order of bishops is, on the contrary, continually made, without reason or proof, and in open contrariety to the facts in the case. We are, therefore, fairly entitled to conclude, that the primitive church, in Scotland, was presbyterian and not prelatic, and in this conclusion, we shall be most strongly confirmed by an examination of the character and government of the Culdees. To this, therefore, we will now proceed.

## § 2. *The government of the ancient Culdees, of Ireland and of Scotland, was presbyterian.*

From our familiarity with the history and doings of Romish monks, we are in great danger, when we hear of the Culdee monks, of doing their memory great injury. We know that the monasteries of Europe, in latter ages, have been the habitations of fraternities of ignorant, voluptuous, lazy, lying mendicants; and we are in danger of imagining the Culdees were a somewhat similar class of men. Nothing could be more erroneous, as they were in every respect different from Romish monks. They supported themselves by their own labor, they were married men, surrounded by

1) Lib. ii. c. ii. in ibid, and Burnet Obs. on 1st. Canon, p. 33.
2) Lib. iii. c. 8, in ibid, and Burnet ibid.
3) In Causa Episcopatus, &c. p. 98.
4) Eccl. Hist. lib. i.
5) Iren. part ii. ch. vii.
6) See Jamieson's Hist. of the Culd. pp. 113, 114, 140, and Broughton's Eccl. Dict. p. 163, fol. i. Spotswood's Hist. p. 4, in Jameson's Fund. of the Hier. p. 40.

their families, and were often succeeded by their own sons. This most interesting body of ecclesiastics are called Culdees, and sometimes Kyllidei, Colidei, and Kelidei. Many derivations are given of this denomination,[1] but the most rational and probable, is, that which makes it a compound of *Keila*, a servant, and *Dia*, God.[2] When the Culdees first made their appearance is very uncertain. They, themselves, constantly affirmed, that they had received their modes of worship from the disciples of John, the apostle, which would connect them with the churches in Gaul.[3] That there were a considerable number of christians in Ireland, at the end of the second century, Jamieson thinks we may safely assume[4]: and that these were found under the character of Culdees, early in the fourth century, is affirmed by some writers.[5]

However this may be, they certainly existed in an organized form, in Ireland, A. D. 546. The founder of these societies, as is generally believed, was Columba,[6] a famous Irish divine. This remarkable man was born in the year 521, and was a lineal descendant, in the sixth generation, from king Nial, of the nine hostages. About the twenty-eighth year of his age, he founded the monastery of Dairmagh, where he resided a short time. Zealous for the diffusion of christianity, he passed over to Albanian Scotia, with twelve companions of his mission, to convert the Picts. In the year 563, he landed at the isle of Iona or Hii, which, if the annals of Ulster and of Tighernach be correct, was given to him by Connal, the son of Comghal, king of the Dalredian Scots. This beautiful island was originally denominated I, Hi, Eo, or Aoi, and afterwards latinized into Iona. Here Columba established a Culdean monastery, famous in the annals of British isles.[7]

Too much importance cannot be attached to the investigation of the ecclesiastical polity of the Culdees, in this argument. For, while they always laid claim to the character of the true, primitive, and apostolical church of Christ in England,[8] they were, as Ledwich informs us, looked up to as the

1) See Jamieson's Hist. of the Culdees, Edinb. 1811, 4to. ch. i. Ledwich's Antiq. of Ireland, p. 102.

2) Jamieson's do. p. 4, and Stuart Hist. of Armagh, p. 624. This is the opinion of Goodall, O'Brien, and Reilly.

3) Ledwich, Antiq. pp. 55, 56.

4) Hist. of Culd. p. 6. See above.

5) Do. p. 6.

6) Stuart's Hist. p. 624.

7) See also Ledwich's Antiq. of Ireland, p. 103, &c.

8) See Jamieson's Hist. pp. 6, 221–223, 239, 243, 351, 353. Ledwich's Antiq. pp. 55, 56.

depositaries of the original national faith.[1] Giraldus Cambrenis describes theirs as 'the ancient religion, in 1185.'[2] It is also probable, that, both in Ireland and Scotland, and in the territory to the south as well as the north of the Grampian hills, they came, in course of time, to form exclusively, or almost exclusively, the national clergy.[3] A great part of the north of England was converted by missionaries from Iona, who were constituted bishops in that country. When it serves his purpose against the Romanists, Mr. Palmer can allow, that the 'Anglo-Saxons were, for the most part, converted by holy bishops, (that is, presbyters,) and missionaries from Ireland,'[4] for Augustine, as Mason shows, 'was not the apostle of the Britons, not of the Scots, not of the Picts, not of the Angles, not of the Saxons, not of all the Jutes, but of Kent only.'[5] And hence, it is apparent, that the determination of their views of church government will go far to settle the question of the original character of British christianity.

If, as Gordon and others think,[6] christianity was first introduced into Ireland in the fourth century, then is the supposition, that the Culdees exhibited the *original* faith and polity of the church, the more strongly probable. That they were the chief instruments in its propagation appears from the following facts. The kingdom of Mercia,[7] containing the counties of Chester, Nottingham, Derby, Stafford, Salop, Northampton, Leicester, Lincoln, Huntingdon, Rutland, Warwick, Worcester, Oxford, Gloucester, Buckingham, Bedford, Hereford, and part of Hertford, was converted to christianity by Finanns, Diuma, Ceollach, and Frumhere, all Irish Culdee presbyters.[8] The kingdom of Northumberland, which contained York, Lancaster, and the northern parts of England, and extended a considerable way into Scotland, was chiefly converted by Aidan, another Irish Culdee presbyter. Paulinus had been sent on this mission by Justus of Canterbury, successor of Augustine, but was soon obliged to retire, and paganism resumed its sway, until Aidan arrived, under happier auspices, and converted the nation.[9] Essex, Middlesex, and Hertford, were converted by Cedd, another Irish Culdee

1) Antiq. p. 94.
2) Apud Jamieson's Hist. p. 358.
3) Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 244.
4) On the Ch. vol. i. 442.
5) Ibid, in Vind. Eccl. Angl. lib. iv. c. 4. See also Dr. Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland, pp. 109, 110.
6) Hist. of Ireland, vol. i. 28.
7) See Palmer's Origines Liturgicæ, vol. ii. p. 250.
8) Beda, Historia, lib. iii. c. 21.
9) Ibid, lib. iii. c. 3, 5, 6.

presbyter, after they had relapsed into paganism.[1] The Picts and Scots of Scotland were converted by Columba, an Irishman, first abbot of Iona, in the sixth century.[2]

The character of the Culdees has never been defamed even by their bitterest enemies. Thus Bede, while indignant at their rejection of the authority of the Roman bishop, testifies,[3] 'Whatever he was himself,' says he, 'we know of him for certain, that he left successors renowned for much continence, the love of God, and regular observance. It is true, they followed uncertain rules in the observation of festival, as having none to bring them the synodical decrees for the keeping of Easter, by reason of their being seated so far from the rest of the world; therefore only practising such works of charity and piety as they could learn from the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical writings.' Their warmest panegyrist could not pronounce a finer eulogium on the purity of their faith and integrity of their practice. The English writers also, although it was decreed at the council of Ceale-hyth, A. D. 816, that no Scottish priest should, for the future, exercise his functions in England, 'nevertheless,[4] bear testimony to the purity of their lives, and the zeal of their apostolic labors, while they denounce their exclusive devotedness to the authority of scripture, their rejection of the Romish ceremonies, doctrines, and traditions, the nakedness of their forms of worship, and the republican character of their ecclesiastical government.' They were, says Ledwich, most highly respected by the people, for their sanctity and learning.[5] The very name of Culdee acquired such sanctity, and such a degree of authority among them, that, as Boece relates, even when the entire suppression of their order was most anxiously sought, 'all priests, almost to our own times, were commonly designed without distinction, Culdees, that is, worshippers of God.'[6]

Of the care with which they were trained to be the guardians of learning, and instructers of the people, we may form some idea from the fact, that eighteen years of study were frequently required of them before they were ordained.[7] As wit-

1) Beda, Historia, lib. iii. c. 22.
2) Ibid, lib. iii. c. 4. See also Dr. Henry's Hist.
3) Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 4, p. 131, ed. 1840. Nearly all this book is occupied with the history and praise of Culdeeism, in one form or another.
4) Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 245.
5) Antiq. p. 94, 107.
6) See in Jamieson's Hist. of Culd. p. 249.
7) Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 229. See also Jamieson's Hist. Culd. pp. 198, 202, 229, 236, 237, 292.

nesses, therefore, they are most competent to give important testimony, not only to the ancient, but also to the apostolical or scriptural polity.

Being indoctrinated and well equipped in the panoply of truth, by eighteen years of study — and inspired with the zeal of their founder — they devoted their efforts, not only to the evangelization of their own country, but of others also. They became adventurous missionaries, to fields the most dangerous and remote. They converted the heathen, and established and confirmed the wavering christians. They taught the use of letters to the Saxons and Normans. They converted the Picts. Burgundy, Germany, and other countries, received their instructions, and Europe rejoiced in the communicated blessings.[1]

We have said, that the Culdees were protestant, as it regards the corrupt doctrines and practices peculiar to the Romish church at that time. The extent to which, in perfect agreement with our presbyterian standards, they were thus protestant, is remarkable, and renders their testimony on the subject of church polity peculiarly interesting to every lover of God's house and order. They maintained the exclusive authority of scripture as a rule of faith.[2] They rejected the Romish doctrines, ceremonies, and traditions.[3] They did not believe in auricular confession;[4] neither did they do penance, receive confirmation, or admit the heresy of celibacy and the sacramental efficacy of priestly matrimony.[5] In common with all the northern Picts and Scots, they differed from the Romish practice in the observance of Easter.[6] Their offices were Gallican and not Roman.[7] They rejected

1) Leland's Hist. of Ireland, vol. i. p. 22. Pictorial Hist. of Engl. vol. i. 229. Jameson, p. 100, &c. The inhabitants of Bretagne, themselves of a Celtic race, (Sibbald, in Jameson, p. 35,) were converted by the Irish or Scots of these days, and followed their customs, and this among the rest, till it was abolished by Hildebert, archbishop of Tours, in his provincial council, in 1127. In the end of the same century or beginning of the next, Giraldus Cambrensis, a zealous catholic priest, complains (of it) as one of the disgraces of Wales, (where, as well as in Ireland, Culdees remained till his time,) that sons got the churches after their fathers, by *succession*, and not by election, possessing and *polluting* the church of God, by inheritance. Keith, Preface. Pink. (Inquiry,) part vi. V. Sibbald's Hist. of Fife, pp. 177, 178. Note.

2) Pict. Hist. of Engl. vol. i. 245. Usher's Relig. of the Anct. Irish and Brit. Lond. 1687, ch. i.

3) Pict. Hist. Engl. vol. i. 245. Jamieson, p. 29.

4) Alcuin, Epist. 26. V. Stuart's Diss. p. 627, and Jamieson, pp. 32, 33, 35, 136, 203, 204, 216, 238.

5) See authorities in Stuart Diss. pp. 622, 623, 627, and Jamieson, pp. 206, 216.

6) Ibid, 627. Jamieson, p. 199. Usher, ibid, ch. ix.

7) Ledwich, p. 112. Jamieson, p. 214. On the differences between these offices, see full account in Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. Usher ut supra, ch. iv.

also authoritative absolution, and confessed to God alone, as believing God alone could forgive sins.[1] They administered baptism in any water, and without the superstitious ceremonies of the Romish order.[2] This is confirmed by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, who says they did not use consecrated chrism.[3] They opposed also the doctrine of the real presence.[4] They withstood the idolatrous worship of the Romanists. Culdean churches were dedicated to the holy Trinity, and not to the blessed virgin, or any other saints.[5] They neither prayed *to* dead men, nor *for* them.[6] The service for the dead, the Irish never practiced till they were obliged to do it, by the council of Cashel, convoked by order of Henry II, in 1172.[7] The Culdees were also enemies to the doctrine of works and of supererogation, and held, as Claudius teaches, to the doctrines of justification by faith only, of predestination, and grace.[8] Their whole manner of celebrating divine ordinances was peculiar and opposed to the Romish. They were, therefore, objected to on the ground of the nakedness of their forms of worship.[9] They paid no respect to holy relics or to the mass.[10] They would not receive Romish ordination.[11] They were more willing to sacrifice their property than to receive the 'canonical rites according to the custom of the Roman and apostolical church.'[12] Bede also testifies, that this difference not only affected the question of Easter, but that they held 'A GREAT MANY OTHER THINGS contrary to ecclesiastical purity and peace.'[13] This charge is repeated in the register of St. Andrews, where it is said, 'that those called Culdees, lived more according to their own opinion and the tradition of men, than according to the statutes of the holy fathers.'[14]

1) Toland in Jamieson, p. 205.

2) Bede, Hist. lib. xi. c. 14. Sibbald's Fife, p. 169, in Jamieson, pp. 205, 206.

3) In Jamieson, p. 206. Usher's Rel. of Anc. Irish and Brit. 4to. Lond. 1687, ch. v.

4) Sedulius in Jamieson, pp. 206, 207.

5) Dalrymple, Spotswood, &c. in Jamieson, pp. 207, 208.

6) Toland in ibid, 209. Usher as above, ch. iii.

7) Toland in ibid, p. 210.

8) See in Jamieson, p. 212, and Tolland in ibid. Usher as above, ch. ii. Usher's work, though not professedly in elucidation of the opinions of the Culdees, is yet applicable in proof, since the Irish were, as Jamieson remarks, taught by the Culdees, and since the doctrines and forms of the churches in Ireland and Scotland were similar. (Hist. of Culdees, p. 206.)

9) Jamieson, p. 213. Sibbald in ibid. Pict. Hist. of Engl. vol. i. 245. They opposed set forms. See Jamieson, p. 244.

10) Jamieson, pp. 214–216. Ledwich Antiq. p. 112.

11) Jamieson, p. 227.

12) Bede, Hist. lib. v. 19. Jamieson, p. 227.

13) Hist. lib. v. c. 18. Jamieson, p. 229.

14) Excerpt Reg. in Pinkerton's Inq. apud Jamieson, pp. 229, 230. See also the similar charge of Richard of Hexham. Ibid, p. 230.

When Boniface was sent from Rome, in order, if possible, to bring the Scots to a full obedience and conformity to Rome, he was opposed by several of the Scots Culdees, namely, by Clemens and Samson, who openly withstood him and his design, as tending only to bring men into subjection to the pope, and slavery to Rome, by withdrawing them from obedience unto Christ. They charged the Romanists with being corrupters of Christ's doctrine.[1] Such being their discordant sentiments, it may be expected that the Romanists and the Culdees regarded each other with no greater love than do their successors, the Romanists and the protestants of the present time. The Culdees, both in Ireland and in Scotland, refused to hold any religious communion or intercourse with the Romanists.[2] According to Bede they esteemed the Romish system 'as of no account, and held no more communication with its abettors than with the heathen.'[3]

Great, therefore, was the antipathy with which these rival claimants to the veneration and support of the British nation, regarded one another. Entrenched in the love, honor, and confidence of the people at large, the Culdees long and successfully resisted the crushing despotism of the Roman church. On the other hand, every possible means were employed, by that tyrannous hierarchy, for the suppression of an order of men, which all along presented such an insurmountable barrier to her arbitrary encroachments. Into the history of that gradual and stealthy advancement of the Romish claims, we cannot enter. They may be found in Mr. Jamieson's most interesting history of the ancient Culdees.[4] It was no easy matter, to eradicate a reverence founded on solid piety, exemplary charity, and superior learning; or to commit sudden violence on characters distinguished by such qualities. The Romish emissaries were, therefore, obliged to exert all their cunning to remove those favorable prejudices. Where force could not secure their purposes, seduction often prevailed.[5] The Culdees were, therefore, in all possible cases, induced to take offices and preferments.[6] Foreign prelates were also

1) Jamieson's Hist. pp. 236 – 240, where will be found a full vindication of their character, and of the true faith of this early martyr to protestant principles.

2) See proof in Jamieson, pp. 220 – 221.

3) Hist. lib. ii. xx. in Jamieson, p. 222. They mutually regarded each other as *sects*. Thus the Romanists treated them. Jamieson, pp. 217, 218, 223, 251, 290, 230. They retorted the charge on the Romanists. See ibid, pp. 221 – 223. The Romanists questioned the validity of their orders, ibid, pp. 226, 233. They would not receive Romish orders, p. 227.

4) See ch. xii. xiii.

5) Ledwich, Antiq. p. 113.

6) Jamieson, p. 248

introduced, or such as had been educated abroad, to the exclusion of natives.[1] Episcopal sees were multiplied.[2] The canons regular, as a permanent order of ministers, devoted to the interests of the church, were established.[3] Political, and every other influence, was brought to bear against them. They were defamed in their character. They were deprived of their privileges. They were dispossessed of their property.[4] They were driven from one retreat after another, until at length their light was extinguished, by the wide-spreading and gross darkness, which covered the nations of the earth.

Notwithstanding the great decline of their power, there continued to be monks, if not abbots, of Hii, at least till the year 1203.[5] Culdees were still found in existence, as late as the beginning of the fourteenth century.[6] The claim of superiority, on the part of the monastery of Hii, was acknowledged, even in Ireland, so late as the tenth century,[7] for it was not till the eleventh century, that Ireland was completely subdued to the Roman authority.[8] And although, wherever the influence of Rome prevailed, the Culdees were removed, as the greatest obstacles to the progress of corruption, yet archbishop Usher tells us, that 'at the greater churches of Ulster, as at Chuanimnis and Daminnis, and principally at Armagh, in his own memory, there were priests called Culdees, who celebrated divine service in the choir, their president being called prior of the Culdees, and acting as præcentor.'[9] They continued, but in a corrupted and debased condition, to retain their name and some lands, even so late as the year 1625.[10] The Culdees thus arose, upon the British isles, as the day-spring from on high, in the dark night of their cruel and horrid superstitions. They continued to shine with greater or less brilliancy, and to guide the travellers to Zion on their heaven-ward journey, until, at the reformation, the Sun of righteousness broke through the gathered clouds, in the fulness of his noontide splendor. Popery, like some huge body, had, by its revolutions, finally succeeded

1) Jamieson, p. 250.
2) Ibid, p. 249.
3) Ibid, pp. 251, 252, &c.
4) On the number of their establishments, see Jamieson, p. 182, and Stuart's History, p. 628.
5) Jamieson, p. 301.
6) Sir James Dalrymple in Jamieson, p. 321.
7) Jamieson, p. 356.
8) Ibid, p. 358; Ledwich, p. 96.
9) Primord. p. 354; in Jamieson, p. 357. Giraldus Cambrensis, in the year 1185, in describing the island Monaincha, speaks of 'a chapel wherein a few monks, called Culdees, devoutly serve God.' This same writer says, 'the isle of Bardsey (in Wales) is inhabited by religious monks, quos Coelecolas vel *Culideos* (Culdees) vocant.' In Jamieson, pp. 358, 359.
10) Gordon's Hist. of Ireland, vol. i. p. 54.

in eclipsing from our view the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Through its hostile agency, the Culdees, the primitive and apostolic teachers of the faith, in England, Ireland, and Scotland, were driven into the wilderness, or utterly destroyed. The powers of darkness were thus, seemingly, established in their ghostly tyranny, and a long, hopeless night of servitude and degradation, awaited the subjugated church of God. But in this very century, the fourteenth, Renatus Lolardus[1] appeared in France, and Wickliffe in England. Thence arose the Lollards, (that is, praisers of God,) who were thus denominated, in ridicule, by a name really expressive of their true character; and after them the reformers. The chain of true apostolical succession, which had been handed down through ages of suffering and toil, was thus again fastened to the rock of ages. Here, says Mr. Jamieson,[2] we have a singular proof of the providence of God, in preserving the truth in our native country, even during the time that *the man of sin* was reigning, with absolute authority, over the other nations of Europe; and in transmitting some of its most important articles, at least, nearly to the time of its breaking forth with renewed lustre at the reformation.

We have entered into these particulars, concerning the Culdees, because there is a very general ignorance as to their real character; their number; their extent; their duration; and their influence. We now proceed to the inquiry more immediately before us, to wit: the character of that ecclesiastical polity, established among the Culdees. Was it prelatical, or was it presbyterian? Many will be found ready to sustain both the affirmative and negative on this question. We affirm, that, while in its associated rules or incidental circumstances it was peculiar; in all that is *essential* to presbyterianism, as far as it is involved in the present controversy, it was presbyterian.

That the polity of the Culdees was not presbyterian, is urged by Lloyd, bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Ledwich, and others, and by Collier, in his Ecclesiastical History. On opening his work this last author declares, that, 'as to the exception of the Culdees, he had shown it altogether unserviceable 'to the model of Geneva, or the kirk of Scotland.'[3] But, on turning to his history,[4] the only disproof he offers, is the declaration of Bede, that there were more bishops than one, at the monastery of Hye. But who were these bishops? They were no more

1) Burnt as a heretic, in 1322, at Cologne.
2) Hist. of Culdees, p. 322.
3) Pref. vol. i.
4) B. ii. cent. vii. vol. i. p. 95, fol. ed.

than the pastors of some certain place or town, who were subject to 'the assembly of the presbyters,' constituting the senate, council, or synod. Bede testifies expressly, that the head of the whole body was 'a monk and a presbyter, but no bishop.'[1] This assembly of presbyters, with this presbyter president, or moderator, 'MADE THE BISHOPS.'[2] The Culdean bishops had nothing more than presbyterian ordination, and were, therefore, presbyters destined to a special work. Of course they could confer no other order than they possessed, and all ordained by them, or with their assistance, let them be called bishops, or archbishops, could have been no more, as to *order*, than presbyters. Now Columba, though a presbyter, ordained bishops in Ireland. According to Fordoun, 'he confirmed and consecrated all the Irish bishops of his time.'[3] He is believed in Ireland, to have established there three hundred monasteries and churches.[4] Columba was denominated, though a presbyter, 'primate of all the Irish bishops, and of all the Irish churches.'[5] 'Till the year 1152,[6] their bishops seem to have been properly *chorepiscopi*, or rural bishops. In Meath alone, there were fourteen bishopries: in Dublin thirteen. Their number, it is supposed, might amount to above three hundred.[7] They, in the same manner with the Scottish and Pictish bishops, exercised their functions at large, as they had opportunity.[8] 'That *bishop*, in Ireland,' says Toland, 'did, in the fifth or sixth centuries, (for example,) signify a distinct order of men, by whom alone presbyters could be ordained, and without which kind of ordination their ministry were invalid: this I absolutely deny: as I do that those bishops were diocesan bishops, when nothing is plainer, than that most of them had no bishopries at all, in our modern sense; not to speak of those numerous bishops frequently going out of Ireland, not called to bishopries abroad, and many of them never preferred there.'[9] We have a similar account of the Irish bishops, in that rare and curious work, the *Monasticon Hibernicum*. 'It is to be observed,' says the author, 'that Colman, having been a bishop in England, was no sooner settled

1) Bede's Ch. Hist. of Gr. Brit. B. iii. ch. iv. Dr. Stapleton's Transl.

2) 'Thus making him bishop they sent him forth,' ibid, B. iii. ch. v.

3) Jamieson's Hist. of the Culdees, Edinb. 4to. 1811, p. 98. 'Though themselves presbyters, they did not hesitate to ordain bishops.' Stuart's Hist. App. xiii. p. 626.

4) Smith's Life of Columb. p. 149, in Stuart, 624.

5) Smith's Life of, 151, 152; Notker Balb. Mart. in Jamieson, pp. 335, 358.

6) Jamieson, ibid, pp. 335, 336.

7) Ledwich's Antiq. Irel. pp. 82, 83.

8) Ibid, p. 106.

9) Nazarenus, Lett. ii. pp. 37, 38.

at Inisbofinde, but that place became a bishopric; so that St. Colman, who had before been called bishop of Lindisfarn, was afterwards styled bishop of Inisbofinde; and the same saint going afterwards to Mays, that place was likewise a bishopric, which was united to that of Inisbofinde; so certain it is that formerly, in the British islands, bishoprics were not regulated and settled, but the bishops were movable, without being confined to any certain diocese.'

Our conclusion is attested also by Mr. Stuart, though exceedingly zealous for episcopacy. 'The bishops alluded to by Bede,' says he, in his very learned dissertation,[1] 'as subordinate to the Culdees of Hi, could not have been diocesan bishops, or members of a regularly-ascending hierarchy; for such prelates would not have submitted to the rule of a presbyter. They were probably of the nature of chorepiscopi, of whom there were many both in Scotia major and Scotia minor. Though the Culdees were themselves presbyters, they did not hesitate to ordain bishops.'

But to all this it is replied, that Usher informs us out of the Annals of Ulster, that there was always a bishop kept in the monastery of Iona, and that Columba thus acknowledged the necessity of a bishop for ordination.[2] Usher, however, has been made to say more than he did really declare. His words are, 'the Ulster annals teach, that even that small island had not only an abbot, but also a bishop.' But even this is only the inference made by Usher, and not the declaration of these annals themselves. For the whole proof of this oft-repeated declaration is contained in these words: 'A. 711 Coide, bishop of Hii, deceases.'[3] Now, although Usher gives a list of the successive abbots in this monastery, he has been unable to give any succession of bishops. Only two abbots in the course of two hundred and sixty-three years are entitled bishops, in the list of Colgan.[4] This title, however, as we have seen, *was given to the abbots, though presbyters*, and used synonymously with the term presbyter. Every one of those included in this succession, embracing the two denominated bishops, were accordingly abbots of Hii. Nor is any one of all that are named called 'bishop of Hii,' all their relations to this island being marked by the term, abbot. They are only spoken of as bishops, therefore, in its general, indeterminate sense. There is, then, *no* proof what-

1) Hist. of Armagh, Append. xiii. p. 626.
2) Lloyd's Hist. Acct. p. 102.
3) Jamieson, p. 49.
4) Jamieson, p. 51.

ever, that there was always in the monastery of Iona a bishop, besides the abbot, for the purposes of ordination. There is *no* proof, that there was any such order as the bishop of Hii, or that there was any such diocese as that of Hii.[1] In still further confirmation of this opinion, it must be mentioned, that the Saxon Chronicle, A. D. 560, contains the following passage: 'From henceforth, there ought to be always in H, (Iona,) an abbot, BUT NO BISHOP: and all the Scottish bishops should be subject to him, because Columba was an abbot, AND NO BISHOP.'[2] Similar is the constitutional canon adopted by the synod of Hereford, c. 4. (A. D. 673:) *Ut episcopi monachi non migrent de loco in locum hoc est de monasterio in monasterium, nisi per dimissionem proprii abbatis, sed in ea permaneant obedientia, quam tempore suæ conversionis promiserant.*'[3] This canon was decreed as one of the canons of the fathers, *quæ definerunt stare canones Petrum*, as Theodorus, their president, affirms in the preface. Now, from this canon it is manifest, that these pretended prelates were sworn to render absolute canonical obedience *to one single presbyter, and never to officiate without his permission;* and how much they resembled modern or Romish prelates, we leave our readers to judge. Henry of Huntingdon affirms, that Columba was a preacher: not a bishop, but a presbyter;' and that his successors 'imitated his example.'[4] Bede himself uses the terms bishop and priest, with respect to what was transacted at Iona, as if they admitted of no difference of signification as to office. When speaking of that bishop, who had been sent to king Oswald, but meeting with no success returned home, he with the same breath gives him both designations: using both the term *antistes*, and *sacerdos;* and the import of both, nay, the great dignity of his office, is made to lie in this, that he was a preacher. It was in his room that Aidan was sent. It is, indeed, said that he deserved to be made a bishop, and that he was ordained. But, besides the circumstance of his being ordained by the *conventus seniorum*, it may be difficult to prove, that he was a preacher before. As it is admitted, that in these

1) See Jamieson, pp. 48 – 52. As to the shadow of a proof produced by Goodal, see ibid. pp. 53 – 56, where it is shown to be less than a shade, and that 'it proves more than the friends of diocesan episcopacy wish, as it destroys their own argument.'

2) Vers. Gibson, p. 21; Stuart's Hist. App. xiii. p. 627; Jamieson's Hist. p. 92, &c., where he fully vindicates the passage against the exceptions of bishop Lloyd

3) Spelm. p. 155; Beda, l. 4, c. 5; Clarkson's Primit. Episcop. p. 39, where, on pp. 38 – 40, he gives several instances of bishops in monasteries, which, nevertheless, were parts of a diocese, and generally less than villages.

4) Jamieson, pp. 95, 96.

monasteries there were laymen,[1] can it be shown, that Aidan was any thing more before his ordination as a bishop? The abbots of Hii, because of their great authority, and extensive influence, although no more than presbyters, were, as we have seen, sometimes called bishops. The terms *abbas* and *episcopus* seem to have been used as synonymous.[2] It is further certain, that during several centuries, those who were called bishops in Scotland had no dioceses, or any fixed charge. There were no regular dioceses for many centuries in England, nor in Scotland, before the beginning of the twelfth century. The foundation of diocesan episcopacy was laid in the erection of the bishopric of St. Andrews.[3]

It is therefore most evident, that the 'bishops of the Scots' were not diocesan bishops. They were not ordained by prelates, but by presbyters; neither did they possess any exclusive powers of ordination.[4] They were themselves subject, as Bede declares, to the authority of their governor, who was a presbyter abbot,[5] and who, on the supposition of their being prelates, was under obligation to be subject to them.[6] Nor can all the ingenuity of the most industrious prelatists destroy the force of this overwhelming refutation of their prelatical assumptions. On the other hand, there is no possibility of reconciling many of the features of the Culdee system, or the facts in the case, with the system of diocesan episcopacy. Their abbot, president, chief pastor or moderator, was a presbyter, and he was constituted president by those who were only presbyters; since 'they chose their abbot or president from among themselves.'[7] Their government was common and resident in the whole body,

1) Neither is it to be forgotten, that those ancient monks were of no order, nor indeed men in orders at all, (as Jerome notes, among others,) but mere laymen, out of whom the clergy were commonly chosen; their monasteries, and particularly those of the Britons, Irish, and Scots, having been schools of all good literature; and many of them in the nature of universities, as, to name no more, the British and Irish Bangor, the Scottish I-colum-kill, and Abernethy, where were taught history, philosophy, theology, with all the liberal sciences.' Toland's Nazarenus, p. 33. 'Some abbots were not so much as priests; but either deacons, or sub-deacons. Some abbots were laymen, as the Irish Saranus, above mentioned; Fullan, that was abbot at Cnobheresburgh, and Swithert, abbot of Docore. The senior monks, likewise, which governed under them, and were like the senior fellows of our colleges, might be such as were not in orders.' Lloyd's Histor. Account, p. 169.

2) See proof in Jamieson, pp. 51, 336, 337.

3) Jamieson, pp. 337, 338, 345, 347. As to England, see p. 41, ibid.

4) Jamieson, pp. 36, 37.

5) Ibid, p. 38.

6) See bishop Lloyd's attempted perversion of the truth in this case refuted in a masterly manner, by Jamieson, pp. 39–48.

7) Jamieson, Hist. of the Culd. p. 35.

not monarchical, and confined to one governing prelate. Thus, when Corman returned from England, 'they (that is, the Culdees,) began,' as Bede relates, 'to have much deliberation in the council,' (*concilio*,) that is, as king Alfred translates it, in their '*gemote*, or meeting,' or, as Stapleton, the old translator, has it, 'the assembly of the presbyters, (elders.')[1] The bishops were subject, not to the presiding abbot alone, but to the abbot in conjunction with his presbyters, that is, the monastery, as Bede calls it, or 'the Scottish aldermen,' as king Alfred renders it.[2] This presbytery not merely received the reports of the returning missionary bishop, but proceeded, as in the case above mentioned, to judge of their conduct, and to inflict censure, if deemed necessary.[3] That this presbytery, and not the presiding abbot or any bishop, ordained, is beyond all reasonable doubt. Bede, in describing the council of presbyters, on the occasion referred to, says, 'it being proved, that he (Aidan) was supereminently endowed with the gift of discretion, thus ordaining him, they sent him forth.'[4] Stapleton renders it, 'thus making him a bishop, they sent him forth to preach.'[5] Cedd, Aidan, Finan, Colman, and others, are mentioned by Bede as having been ordained by the Scots, by presbyters; and as having there received all the ordination they ever had.[6] Gilbert Murray, in his speech before the cardinal, in A. D. 1176, says, that 'she, (that is, this early Culdee church of Scotland,) did also appoint, ordain, and consecrate the bishops and priests.'[7] So that till A. D. 1109, when the right was transferred, no bishop in Scotland could be ordained without the consent of the presbyters of Iona.[8]

These Culdees had no third order of preachers, called deacons, since all their preachers were presbyter-bishops. Nor do we hear a syllable of all the other accumulated subordination of offices, of which the system of prelacy has in all cases been so fruitful. Rome, too, pronounced the same sentence of invalidity against the orders of the Culdees, that she now hurls, as a *brutum fulmen*, against our own, which is a positive proof that they were, in her estimation, non-prelatical, uncanonical, and therefore presbyterian. Thus, to illustrate: Wilfrid, a Saxon monk, who carried on the debate with Colman,

1) See Jamieson, p. 60.
2) Bede, Eccl. Hist. l. 3, c. 3, and Jamieson, pp. 69, 70.
3) Jamieson, ibid, pp. 75, 76.
4) Hist. l. iii. c. 5, &c.; Jamieson pp. 61, 84, 88, &c., where he fully vindicates this view.
5) In ibid, p. 62.
6) In ibid, p. 90.
7) In ibid, p. 242.
8) Jamieson, pp. 339 – 341.

bishop of Lindisfarne, about the time of observing Easter, 'persisted,' says William of Malmesbury, 'in refusing to be ordained by Scottish bishops, or by those whom the Scots had ordained, because the apostolical see scorned to have any fellowship with them.'[1] He went, therefore, to France, where he was consecrated bishop. Numerous facts, of a similar kind, might, were it necessary, be added. Thus Bede, when giving an account of the ordination of Ceadda, by Wini, with the assistance of two *British* bishops, says, that, 'except Wini, there was not then any bishop canonically ordained in all Britain,' referring, as Selden supposes, to the mode of ordination at Hii by presbyters.[2] The synod of Vernon, in France, speaks of those 'bishops, who wandered about, having no parish, neither do we know what kind of ordination they had.'[3] The second council of Chalons, in 813, says; 'There are, in certain places, Scots, who call themselves bishops, and contemning many, without the license of their lords and superiors, ordain presbyters and deacons.[4] In like manner, in a letter written in 1170, and attributed to Richard, archbishop of Canterbury, it is said, 'in these days certain false bishops of Ireland, . . . . although they have received from no one imposition of hands, discharge episcopal functions for the people.'[5] Bede informs us, that rather than receive the Romish rite of ordination, the Culdees, of the monastery at Rippon, chose rather to quit the place.[6]

Neither is this view of the Culdee system unsupported by names of great authority. It is that taken by all the ancient and best historians. We have already adduced the Saxon Chronicle, Bede, and Henry of Huntingdon. John of Fordoun declares, 'the Scots had, as teachers of the faith, and administrators of the sacraments, only presbyters and monks, following the custom of the primitive church.'[7] Bocce says, the Culdees chose, by common vote among themselves, a chief presbyter, who had power in things belonging to God; and that, for many years after, he was called bishop of the Scots, as it is delivered in our annals.'[8] Before the time of Palladius, he adds, 'the people, by their suffrages, chose bishops from the monks and Culdees.'[9] In the breviary of Aberdeen, we have nearly the same account, namely, that,

1) See in Jamieson, p. 330.
2) In Jamieson, p. 226.
3) Binii, Concil. iii. 398; in ibid, p. 226.
4) Binii, iii. 195, in ibid.
5) In Jamieson, p. 227, from Pet. Blesensis.
6) Hist. l. v. 19, in ibid.
7) Scottichron. l. iii. c. 8. See vindicated in Jamieson, p. 97.
8) Hist. lib. vi. fol. 95, b. in ibid 98.
9) Hist. l. vii. fol. 133, a.

before Palladius, 'the Scots had for the teachers of the faith and the ministers of the sacraments, presbyters and monks, following only the rite and custom of the primitive church.'[1] Martine, in his Reliquiæ, admits that the ancient Culdees elected from among themselves their own bishop; that the Scottish bishops generally were not fixed; that they were made by the Culdees, and that they were supported by the voluntary contributions of the people.[2] This also is the opinion of Selden, Blondel, Smectymnuus, Henry, Toland, Jamieson,[3] Gibbon,[4] Buchanan,[5] Petrie,[6] Sir J. Dalrymple,[7] not to name a host of others, among the moderns.[8] Nor is this opinion at all shaken by the jesuitical pleading of bishop Lloyd, or the unsupported and bravado assertions of Dr. Ledwich, or the ignorant plagiarism of meaner writers. The authors of that recent and elaborate work, the Pictorial History of England, allow that the opinion which makes their system of ecclesiastical polity 'strictly presbyterian,' 'has been most generally held, and seems most conformable to the expressions of Bede, the earliest authority on the subject.'[9] 'After the most impartial investigation of this subject,' says Mr. Jamieson,[10] 'of which I am capable, I have not found a shadow of proof, that any of those, sent forth as bishops from that island, were ordained by such as claimed a dignity superior to that of presbyter. And that the Culdees exercised the right and power of ordaining, without any consecration from a superior order of clergy, those who were called *bishops*, in a general sense, or *bishops of Scotland*, and this without any *congé d'elire* from the sovereign, as late as the twelfth century, appears from the fact, that, in the year 1109, this right was taken from them, and vested in the primate of St. Andrews. All the right of the Culdees, 'throughout the whole kingdom of Scotland,' although at this time they were very numerous, was then transferred to a single person. Here, says Mr. Jamieson, we have the admission of a change, from something which strikingly resembles presbytery, to the very acme of prelacy.[11]

From this examination into the polity of the Culdees, we may at once see the futility and suicidal character of the

1) In Julio, fols. 24, 25, in ibid, 100.

2) Reliq. Divi. Andreæ, pp. 27, 28; in ibid, 100, 101.

3) Stuart's Hist. of Armagh, p. 629.

4) In Jamieson, p. 235; Hist. vol. vi. p. 246.

5) In ibid, p. 236.

6) Ibid, p. 237.

7) Ibid, p. 240.

8) See Stuart's Hist. of Armagh, p. 627.

9) See Adomnani, Vit. St. Col. and Hist. as above, vol. i. p. 229.

10) Hist. of Culd. p. 331.

11) Hist. of Culd. pp. 340 – 344.

claim put forth by episcopalians to exclusive prelatical succession, as essential to the validity of the ministry, since, upon the validity of presbyterian ordination and the apostolicity of presbyterian bishops, depends the whole succession of the English church, and, by necessity, of the American episcopal churches. Sir James Dalrymple, in his Collections of Scottish History, says;[1] 'the second head is concerning the mission by the abbot and monks of this monastery, (Icolmkill,) to convert the Northumbrian Saxons to the christian faith; and the appointing and ordaining bishops or doctors for these churches, from whose disciples, and *by whose ordinations, more churches were planted, and bishops and doctors were established in the other Saxon kingdoms*, which Saxon churches of the Scottish institution did drown the authority of the pope and bishop of Rome, and for a long time did maintain the differences betwixt these and Roman Saxon churches, which at last prevailed over all the Saxon churches.'[2]

### § 3. *The Paulician, Aerian, and Vaudois churches were presbyterian.*

The Paulician churches were also presbyterian. In reference to these the reader is referred to what was said above.[3] We will only add the opinion of Mr. Soames, an episcopalian, in his recent edition of Mosheim. He says, 'at the same time we discover, as to most of their doctrines, that they had, in several respects, more *correct ideas of religion*, of religious worship, AND OF CHURCH-GOVERNMENT, *than the prevailing church* at that day had; and that they drew on themselves persecution by their *dislike of images*, and by their OPPOSITION TO THE HIERARCHY, *more than* by their other religious opinions.'[4]

The Aerian churches were also presbyterian. In reference to these we also refer to our previous remarks.[5]

We proceed to remark, that the churches of the Vaudois,

1) Presb. Defended, p. 67.

2) On the subject of the Culdees, see Jamieson's Hist. of the Ancient Culdees, Edinb. 1811, 4to. pp. 415; Dr. Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland, p. 102, &c.; Jameson's Fundamentals of the Hierarchy, pp. 33–47; Baxter's Episcopacy, part ii. p. 224; Hetherington's Hist. of the Ch. of Scotland, ch. i. and the histories generally; Baxter's Disput. on Ch. Govt. p. 97; Stuart's History of Armagh, Append. on the State of the Ancient Irish Church, p. 612, &c.; Plea for Presbytery, p. 51, &c.

3) See B. ii. c. 4, concl.

4) See also a valuable note on these witnesses for the truth in Faber's Primitive Doctr. of Justification, near the end, and a very able article in the Churchman's Monthly Review, Jan. 1843.

5) B. ii. c. 4, § 2.

or the Waldenses, were presbyterian. In entering upon the consideration of the Waldenses, in some respects the most remarkable people on the face of the earth, we are reminded of an observation of Merle D'Aubigne, that the encroachments of power form a large portion of all history: the resistance of those whose rights are invaded, forms the other part. In the churches of the Vaudois, we have the bush which has always been surrounded by the flames of persecution; and which has, nevertheless, never yet acknowledged the yoke and authority of papal Rome, but has, unconsumed, preserved the doctrines and polity of the scriptures from the very earliest period of christianity. Hence Milton denominates them 'the most ancient stock of religion.' 'It has ever been the interest of the church of Rome to represent the principles of the reformation as mere modern innovations, that they may the more triumphantly ask the protestant, 'where was your church before the days of Luther?' On this account, they assert that the Waldenses can be traced no farther back than the days of Peter Waldo, who flourished in the middle of the twelfth century; and that from him they have derived their title, by which they are known in history. But the terms Waldenses, Vallenses, and Vaudois, are merely territorial appellations, meaning 'inhabitants of the valley,' applied to those who dwelt in the valleys within the confines of Piedmont; as they were called in the south of France, Albigenses, from having their chief residence in that kingdom at Albi. Upon the same principle, those who adopted their principles were sometimes called, in later times, Lombards, Picards, Bulgarians, or Bohemians, according to the countries in which they resided.'[1]

1) On the origin and antiquity of the term Vallenses, Vaudois, &c. see Dr. Gilly's Valdenses. Edinb. 1841. pp. 2, 3. 'Frequently, they were named after most distinguished teachers; and thus they have been successively termed Lollards, Josephites, Arnoldists, Berengarians, Henriciens, and other such appellations. Sometimes a title was given them from their mode of life; and in this way they were called Fraticella, from their brotherly affection for each other; Paterinians, from their frequent sufferings; and Passagenes, from their being driven from place to place by persecution. But these appellations were too harmless for the malignity of those who hated the Waldenses, and others were invented for the purpose of bringing them into general hatred and contempt. In Dauphiny, they were called Chaignards, and those who had passed beyond the Alps were called Tramontanes, a word equivalent to barbarians. They kept no day holy but the Sabbath; and on this account they were sometimes called Insabathas, as if they observed no Sabbath at all. In Germany, they were branded by the title of Gazares, meaning a people execrably wicked; and in Flanders, Turlupins, because their dwelling was with the wolves. In addition to these opprobrious names, charges were brought against them, of the same foul character with which the heathens had been wont to asperse the primitive christians.' On the reproachful tenets and practices attributed to them, see Mr. Faber's able work.

That the Cottian Alps, says Dr. Gilly, have been inhabited by a relatively pure association of christians from time immemorial, who have testified for the truth, upon the same articles of faith as the protestant churches of modern times, is a tradition not unsupported by documentary evidence, but still open to discussion. The Valdenses of these regions maintain, that they are descended from a race who peopled the same villages, and professed the same gospel, in the first centuries of the christian era. 'We have inherited our religion,' say they, 'with our lands, from the primitive christians. This is no modern pretension, put forth since the reformation; for the same language, as to their antiquity, was held by their ancestors, not only after the time of Valdo, but in the age before that reformer, to whom their origin is sometimes imputed.' The same author presents, also, as the result of his own extensive investigations, and from the documents now publishing by the historical commission of Turin, the following authentic notices. We learn, that the Cottian Alps received the gospel in the second century, and that Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, made himself master of the Celtic language, that he might minister among the mountaineers; the facilities of intercourse between the subalpines and the inhabitants of the plain, were secured by good roads, leading through the centre of the valleys now called protestant, in the direction of Mount Genevre, Oulx, and Fenestrelle; that the village of St. Secondo, in the valley of the Clusone, is so called from a martyr of that name in the year 120; that Crisolo, near Rosa, in Val Lucerna, was the place of St. Geoffrey's concealment, before his martyrdom, in 297; and that, during the persecution of Diocletian, many christians of the Theban legion found refuge in these regions.[1] We know that, a hundred years afterwards, Ambrose, of Milan, whose diocese extended to the Alps, complained of his mountain clergy, refusing to become celibates, on the plea of ancient custom;[2] and that Vigilantius made the Cottian Alps the place of his sojournment,[3] when he opposed himself to the errors of the church; because there he was received with kindness by professors of christianity, who refused to adopt the services of *monachism*, prayers for the dead, saint and relic worship, and other superstitions which were creeping into practice.[4] Again, after an

1) See 'Storia delle Alpi Maritime,' published in Hist. Patr. Mon.

2) De Officiis, lib. i. cap. 50.

3) Hieron. Opera, vol. iv. p. 279. Epist. 37. aliter 53.

4) Mr. Faber (see his very learned Inquiry into the history of the Valdenses, p.227) thinks the Valdenses may have been called Leonists, from this Vigilantius, the Leonist, or native of *Lugdunum Convenarum*.

interval of more than 400 years, we find that doctrines, called by Jonas, of Orleans, and Dungalus,[1] *the heresy of Vigilantius*, were still cherished here, and that Claude, bishop of Turin, 'that bright and golden ring in the chain of Cisalpine protestantism,' gave the sanction of his episcopal authority to opinions which the Gallic reformer of the fourth century had been reviled by Jerome for propounding. Claude found two parties in his diocese, one of which favored his schemes of church reform: and after his death (according to the authority of Dungalus) it was called the sect of Claude. Thus it is certain that Vigilantius, and after him Claude, left disciples in these parts,[2] just where we are looking for them; but we have no ground for maintaining that the Waldenses were in a state of secession from the provincial bishops of France, or Italy, within whose dioceses they were situated, at either of the periods to which we have just referred, the fourth and the ninth centuries. In those days, and for two or three hundred years after Claude, the truth might be held, and public testimonies for the truth might be given, and protests against the errors of Rome might be made, without the necessity of separation from the church called catholic; witness the great Iconoclastic question, which agitated christendom in the ninth and tenth centuries. There is reason, therefore, to believe that, until a much later period, congregations of the Cottian Alps may have continued to maintain *a purer faith than that of Rome*, without leading to any proceedings in those parts, which could be called acts of schism on the one side, or of persecution on the other. But that there existed among the Cottian Alps a people professing the pure religion of the gospel, is beyond all doubt. Their protest against growing corruptions was commenced by Vigilantius about A. D. 401. 'Inter Hadriæ fluctus, Cottiique Regis Alpes,' as Jerome says, who also declares that *many bishops* were among his followers.[3] The same protest was sustained in A. D. 600, under Peter of Valdis; in A. D. 820, under Claude, of Turin; in A. D. 945, to the distress of Atto, of Vercelli; in 1050, as is testified by Peter Damian; and in 1124, to the horror of abbot Rodolph.[4]

1) See Dungali Epist. adv. Claud. and Jonae Auv. Episc. Epist. adv. Claud. in Bib. Pat. vol. iv. p. 536, and vol. v. pp. 153–163.

2) It is curious to observe how, from Philactrius, who died in 387, down to Ratherius, who died in 974, and again, from Peter, of Chigny, who wrote in 1127, to the Reformation, *mountain districts* are stated to have been the *latibula*, or places of security, where non-conformity with the dominant church lurked.

3) Hier. adv. Vigil. c. 1. opp. vol. ii. p. 108, and Ep. 63.

4) See these authorities given in full in the Churchman's Monthly Review, Feb. 1843, p. 128, &c.; in Faber's

That the claim of the Waldenses to be descendants of those who, from father to son, have preserved the primitive and apostolical faith, is therefore well founded, may be authenticated by more modern witnesses. The author of the 'Nobla Leyczon,'[1] A. D. 1100; Moneta,[2] who wrote against the alleged heresies of his days, and died in 1240; and Reinerus,[3] the inquisitor, whose treatise was completed in 1250; all bear witness that the religionists mentioned by them, under the appellation of *Vaudis* and *Lombardi Pauperes*, and whom we are led to identify with the Valdenses, professed in those times to trace their religious genealogy and characteristics to the primitive ages. Remarkable are the words of Reinerus Pisanus, who wrote about the year 1250. In reference to the Waldenses and Albigenses, he says,[4] 'On three accounts, among all the sects which are, or have been, there is none more destructive than the poor people of Lyons. 1st. because it has been of the longest duration; some say that this sect has continued since the time of pope Sylvester; others since the days of the apostles. 2d. Because it is more universal, for there is scarce any part of the world in which this sect has not diffused itself. 3d. Because all other sects beget horror in the minds of men, on account of the exceeding grossness of their blasphemies against God; whereas, these of Lyons have a great appearance of sanctity, in that they live justly before men, believe righteously concerning God, and all the articles contained in the creed; only they blaspheme and hate the church.' Thus Reinerius, who was far from being their friend, most freely acknowledges that this sect was diffused almost every where through the world, and, according to some, had continued from the days of the apostles. With such evidence of the fact before us, well, therefore, may we

Inquiry and Provincial Letters, vol. i.; Ducher. Spicil. vol. viii. pp. 111, 112; Palmer on the Ch. vol. i. 188; Planter's Hist. of Helv. Conf. vol. i.

1) 'The inquirer, who would make himself master of the religious character of the Valdensian church, must take care not to be led out of his way in search of it. He must confine his attention to one particular locality; that is, the subalpine territory lying between Mount Genevre and Mount Viso. It has been the mistake of many writers and readers, to ask, among the heretics of all times and places, for the creed of the Valdenses. But, if we would do them justice, and ascertain the articles of faith really maintained by them, we should look to three periods of time for this information.'

2) Moneta contra Cathoros et Valdenses, lib. v. p. 405, edit. Richini, Romæ, 1743.

3) Reinerus de Sectis Antiquorum Hæreticorum, c. 4. Bib. Patr. vol. iv.

4) Ayton's Constit. of Ch. p 576.

Rejoice that human hearts, through scorn,
Through shame, through death made strong,
Before the rocks and heavens, have borne
Witness to God so long.

Great deference, then, must be paid to the testimony of a church which has thus continued unchanged for sixteen centuries, amid torrents of persecution which swept over their valleys, and who have 'borne and had patience, and not fainted or denied the faith.' If, also, as history seems clearly to indicate, and learned men admit,[1] the Vaudois were the chosen depositories of the truth, and that, from their never-extinguished lamp, the light of the gospel spread over Europe, they have surely no small claim to the veneration and regard of 'all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' The 'Lollards,' who were among the earliest reformers, derived that title from a Vaudois pastor, so named. One also who was so designated, Walter Lollard, visited England in the time of the third Henry, and disseminated those doctrines which were subsequently collected by Wickliffe into one focus, justly entitling him to be called 'the morning star of the (English) Reformation.' If the doctrines of the Waldenses are identically the same with those of all the orthodox churches of the reformation; and if they are still preserved, as a church and people, from the exterminating fury of papal persecution, through the strong-armed interference of the puritan Cromwell; the character of their ecclesiastical regime must be of the first importance.

That they were, and continue to be, essentially presbyterian, we believe to be the truth in the case, and for the following reasons. Their ecclesiastical system is now undoubtedly presbyterian. 'Their discipline,' says Dr. Gilly,[2] 'is now presbyterian, *very much* resembling that of the church of Scotland.' This is his report in 1841. In 1831 he was only prepared to admit, that 'the present ecclesiastical government of the Vaudois is, *in some degree*, like that of the presbyterian church, but more relaxed and indulgent.'[3] The degree to which the resemblance exists, which has increased within ten years '*very* much,' may be seen from what Dr. Gilly himself says, after long residence among them. 'Each church, by its own consistory, composed of minister, deacon, and elders, manages its own affairs in ordinary matters, and never receives a pastor but by its own consent.' He also shows that they have presbyterial and synodical assemblies;

1) Presb. Rev. Jan. 1842, pp. 600, 601.

2) Vallenses, p. 22.

3) See his Waldensian Researches. Lond. 1831, p. 383.

and that 'their moderator does not even ordain, or exercise any authority unless in conjunction with the table, (or Synod,) at the synod, as president.' Truly, this '*some degree like*' is a very perfect likeness of presbyterianism, and wholly unlike prelacy. The article on the subject of the ministry, in their confession made in their synod, held in 1839, is the following:[1] 'The church should have pastors appointed to preach the word of God, to administer the sacraments, and to watch over the flock, together with elders and deacons, as in the primitive church.'—Art. 31. This view of their present ecclesiastical system is also vouched by Mr. Perceval, who says, 'that they are, at the present time, presbyterian, is certain.'[2] 'In regard to episcopal consecration,' says Mr. Ackland, an episcopalian,[3] 'this ornament of our church establishment, so justly cherished by us, is unquestionably no longer preserved among the Vaudois.'

While the Waldensians are now so perfectly presbyterian in their whole order of the ministry and discipline of the church, Dr. Gilly, with all his ingenuity and research, can discover no period when an alleged change took place, and prelacy was abandoned. 'It is not exactly known,' he says,[4] 'at what time, or by what means, the original polity was changed; but, at the latter end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century, we find the moderator of their church, as the chief ecclesiastical minister was then and is now called, ordaining by the imposition of hands, and visiting each parish every year, and censuring or approving, and reporting to the synod.' It thus appears that, as early as the 16th century, the Waldensian polity was precisely what it is now. Every church had its consistory. Every consistory and pastor was subject to the synod, which was composed of all the pastors, with elders. Over this synod, one of the ministers, chosen by his brethren, and without any second ordination, presided. This presiding minister was called *then*, as he is *now*, MODERATOR. He was required, in accordance with the plan of the early Scottish church, to visit the different parishes, and to ordain *only in conjunction with other ministers.* But he was, in all things, responsible to the synod by which he had been appointed to office. The Waldenses, therefore, were as essentially presbyterian in the 16th century as they are in the 19th, and in both their system VERY MUCH resembles that of the church of Scotland. Dr. Gilly would fain

1) See Dr. Gilly's Vallenses, p. 8.
2) On Apost. Succ. p. 31.
3) Hist. of the Glorious Return of the Vaudois, p. 89; and Blair's Hist. of Waldenses, i. p. 540.
4) Waldensian Researches, p. 384.

construct a prelate out of this '*moderator*,' while he declines offering any manner of proof that he possessed any one of the exclusive powers by which a prelate is distinguished. Nay, he cuts the throat of his own gratuitous assumption; for, says he,[1] '*it is most probable* that, even while their ecclesiastical polity *was episcopal*, their bishop *possessed no powers*, except those of ordination and censure, independently of the synod. Hence their bishops make no figure in history. At present their moderator does *not* even ordain, nor does he seem to exercise *any* authority, unless in conjunction with the table, at the synod, as president.'

Dr. Gilly is as anxious to find some colorable pretext for imputing to the Waldenses the character of prelacy, as if his whole credit as an author depended upon the discovery. He *now*, therefore, thinks he has found this in an ancient manuscript, quoted by Morland, which speaks of 'regidors or leaders of the people and pastors.'[2] But here the reference is manifestly not to prelates, but to the elders and the pastors; for the same document declares, that it was one of the powers given by God *to his servants, to choose* both these leaders and these presbyters.[3] And Leger, who quotes this document, explains the *ancient* discipline of the Waldenses in the following words, which might be supposed to be an extract from our form of government.[4] 'On the last Friday of every month the conference (le colloque) of the valley of Lucerne is held; and every first Friday of the month, that of Perouse and St. Martin. It consists of all the pastors, and one or two elders of every church. Each church receives the conference in its turn; each pastor preaches also in his turn. In these conferences they deliberate on all those disputes that the consistories had not settled; so that nothing was to be brought before the general synod, except in the way of appeal from the conferences.' We will only add on this head, that the 'Vaudois in Piedmont' are enumerated by Mr. Leslie among those schismatics, who moulded their churches on the presbyterian polity.[5]

As no period can be determined when presbytery was introduced in the place of prelacy, so would it appear, that the most ancient documents of the Waldensian churches, know nothing of the system of prelacy. It is very probable, according to the evidence presented, that the Waldenses were inde-

1) Waldensian Researches, p. 383.
2) Vallenses, p. 22.
3) See in Sims's Historical Def. of the Vaudois, p. 493.
4) See in ibid, p. 492.
5) Letter on Episc. in Scholar Armed, vol. i. p. 80.

pendent of the jurisdiction of Rome, till the eleventh century.[1] The Lombardian churches then apostatizing to the Romish church, the Vaudois nobly refused to subject themselves to the pope, and resolutely maintained their independence, although the churches of Aquileia, Turin, and Milan, were all subjected. As previously to this time the Vaudois were included in the diocese of Turin, and not distinctly spoken of, it will be sufficient for our purpose to show, that in their earliest *independent* state they knew nothing of prelacy. This has been done, up to the period of the reformation. Now in the year 1520, Claude Seyssell, first archbishop of Turin, published a treatise against the Waldenses, after having made an episcopal visitation, of that part of his diocese which was inhabited by them.[2] The points on which they then protested against the church of Rome, will be found to exclude much that is involved in the *prelatical* theory of ministerial succession. Their doctrine on the ministry he thus represents.[3] 'Those whom they judge to be the best amongst them, they appoint to be their priests, (that is, presbyters.) *to whom* upon all occasions, they have recourse, as to the vicars and *successors of the apostles.*'

Their historian, Leger, therefore, represents their doctrine on the apostolical succession, so as utterly to confound that which is prelatical.[4] 'So also,' says he, 'since the holy scriptures declare, that the true church is the same from the beginning of the world, and that all those who maintain the true faith that it teaches us, are its legitimate children; the Vaudois, proving beyond contradiction, that they have always professed, and still profess, this same faith, are such without contradiction; since the true succession of the church is not merely a local or a personal succession, but that of faith and sound doctrine; as the Holy Spirit himself informs us, in Rom. 4: 9, 11; Mark 3; John 8, &c.; and since, as Gregory Nazienzen said, in his funeral oration for Athanasius, 'all those who follow the faith of Abraham, are the true children of Abraham.' The same historian remarks, that while the Waldenses thus preserved the true succession in its purity, which the Romish church had corrupted, nevertheless 'their pastors assumed, with equal readiness, the name of priests, of pastors, of barbes, AND EVEN OF BISHOPS.'[5] This, therefore, at once puts to silence the only shadow of an argument yet

1) Hist. Def. of the Waldenses or Vaudois, p. 486, and particularly Blair's Hist. of the Waldenses, vol. i. p. 194, &c. B. i. ch. iii. who enters fully into the subject.

2) Dr. Gilly's Vallenses, p. 8.

3) Quoted by Dr. Allix, in his Remarks on the Eccl. Hist. of the Albigenses, p. 239, Oxf. 1821.

4) In Sims's Hist. Def. p. 483.

5) Sims's Hist. Def. p. 491.

offered, in favor of their prelatical character, derived from the use of the term bishop, since they used it *synonymously with pastor*. Æneas Sylvius says,[1] 'they deny the hierarchy; maintaining that there is no difference among the priests by reason of dignity of office.' The same view of their system is given by Thuanus, Walsingham, Alphonsus de Castro, Voetius, and others.[2] Bellarmine represents them as denying the divine right of prelacy. Medina, in the council of Trent, declared that the Waldenses agreed in company with many of the fathers, with Aerius, who rejected episcopacy.[3]

The same thing is taught us by the accusations of their Romish persecutors, 'that they were without any duly ordained ministry; that they allowed mere laymen, that is, such as were not prelatically ordained, to discharge ministerial functions among them,'[4] and that they violently opposed the Romish prelacy. 'In their secret preachings, moreover,' says Conrad of Lieptenau,[5] speaking of them in A. D. 1212, 'which they commonly made in lurking places, they derogated from the church of God and the priesthood.' Reinerius says,[6] 'that their contempt of ecclesiastical power was their first heresy, which, under the influence of Satan, precipitated them into innumerable errors. They say, that the Roman church is not the church of Jesus Christ; but that it is a church of malignants, and that it fell away under Sylvester, when the venom of temporal possessions was infused into the church.[7] They say, that they themselves are the church of Christ, because they observe the doctrine of Christ agreeably to the words and examples of the gospel and the apostles.[8] They falsely say, that, except themselves, almost no one preserves evangelical doctrine in the church.[9] They say, that they despise all the statutes of the church, because they are burdensome and too numerous.[10] They can repeat by heart, in the vulgar tongue, the whole text of the New Testament, and great part of the Old; and, adhering to the text alone, they reject decretals and decrees with the sayings and expositions of the saints.[11] They say, that the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, without the statutes of the church, is quite sufficient

1) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 137, 2d. ed.

2) Ibid, pp. 137, 355.

3) See in Bellarmine De Clericis, 1, 5, pp. 5, 6; in Newman on Romanism, p. 92.

4) Perceval on Apost. Succ. p. 31; Pylicdorf cited by Bossuet, iii. p. 45; Dr. Allix, Pied. p. 239, and Albig. p. 207.

5) See the original in Faber's Vallenses and Albigenses, p. 473, &c.

6) Thuan. Hist. l. vi. § 16, vol. i. p. 221; in Faber, pp. 488, 489.

7) Reiner de hæret, c. v. in Bibl. Patr. vol. xiii. p. 300.

8) Reiner de hæret, c. v. p. 300.

9) Ibid, c. v. p. 300.

10) Ibid, c. v. p. 300.

11) Ibid, c. v. p. 300.

for salvation; and that the tradition of the church is the tradition of the Pharisees.[1] They despise all ecclesiastical customs, which are not read in the gospel; such as Candlemas, Palm-Sunday, the reconcilement of penitents, the adoration of the cross on Good Friday, the feast of Easter, and the festivals of Christmas and the saints.'[2] In further confirmation of these views it is to be mentioned, that Peter Waldo 'expressed contempt for the distinction of orders, which he styles one of the marks of the beast.'[3]

We will now refer to some of their own original documents; and first to 'The Ancient Discipline of the Evangelical Churches in the Valleys of Piedmont.' Perrin calls this the discipline under which the Waldenses and Albigensis lived; extracted out of divers authentic manuscripts, written in their own language, several hundreds of years before Luther or Calvin. The original is in a Spanish dialect, which is thought rather older than the provincial language used in the confession of 1120, but the tongue is radically the same. The Spanish, with slight variations, was spoken in Provence, and the valleys. In article 2, of this discipline,[4] concerning pastors, it is said, 'all those who are to be received as pastors among us, while they remain with their relations, they entreat us to receive them into the ministry, and afterwards, having good testimonials, they are, by the imposition of hands, admitted to the office of preaching. Among the other powers which God has given to his servants, he hath given them authority to elect the leaders who govern the people, and to constitute the elders in their charges, according to the diversity of the work in the unity of Christ; which is proved by the saying of the apostle in the epistle to Titus.' 'When any of us, the aforesaid pastors, fall into any gross sin, he is both excommunicated and prohibited from preaching.' Here there is, manifestly, allusion only to one order of ministers, and not the slightest reference to three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons.

Again, in article 4, concerning elders and councils, it is said, 'rulers and elders are chosen out of the people according to the diversity of the work, in the unity of Christ.' 'We that are pastors assemble once a year, to treat of our affairs in a general council.' That this discipline fully accords with presbyterianism, may be further evidenced, by the approbation it

1) Ibid, c. v. p. 301.
2) Ibid, c. v. p. 301.
3) Cited by Leger, Perceval, p. 31.
4) The whole is given, with all their ancient documents, in Blair's Hist. of the Waldenses, vol. i. appendix; see for this at p. 533.

received from all the reformers.[1] 'Bucer, the Swiss reformer, having largely conversed with two of the Waldensian pastors, declared, that they have preserved among them the discipline of Christ, which constrains us to give them this praise.' In 1533, Melancthon wrote them as follows: 'in reality I do not at all disapprove of that very severe manner of exercising the discipline, which is practiced in your churches. Would to God it were enforced with a little more rigor in ours.' Mr. Ackland remarks, 'if the value of different systems of governing be estimated by their results, that which existed in the Vallensian church has certainly never been excelled. The synod, presided over by the moderator, has always possessed the chief authority in the Vallensian church. It was composed, as at present, of all the pastors, and a portion of the elders deputed by the people.'

Dr. Gilly pleads, says Mr. Blair,[2] from article 2, of the discipline, the existence of 'degrees in the sacerdotal orders' of the ancient Waldenses; but said article shows that no other superiority was admitted among the Waldensian pastors over one another, except what arose from seniority and experience, which is admitted in every church. When two went together, the younger was to be guided by the elder. They did not distinguish the teaching presbyter from the bishop. They had, indeed, three orders of men above their ordinary members, the bishop or teaching elder, the lay elder, and the deacon. The existence of the second class is clearly expressed in article 4, of the foregoing discipline, for they are called 'rulers and elders chosen out of the people.' The deacons are always mentioned as taking charge of the funds of the churches, but never as preaching. Though the public money is mentioned in the above article, yet the existence of deacons is not stated. Probably at that time the ministers and lay elders were able to take charge of the contributions. After all, these three orders are probably just what Dr. Allix means by bishops, priests, and deacons.' Mr. Ackland, also, objects that the moderator was not amenable to the Waldensian synod, and he *alone* 'could confer holy orders by the imposition of hands; and he *only* had authority to visit the churches, inquire into the doctrine and practice of their pastors, examine at his discretion the whole economy of the church, and reform such abuses as he might discover.' But no intimation is made in the second article of discipline, that the power of ordination was restricted to the moderator. The synod does the whole, for the document runs: 'we

1) Leger, part i. pp. 105, 199. 2) Hist. of Wald. i. pp. 539, 540.

appoint them their lessons; they are, by the imposition of hands, admitted to the office of preaching.' Whatever may be the practice of the present Waldenses, their ancestors seem to have ordained ministers by the moderator, who was joined by his brethren in the act of laying on hands. Popular election was practiced in the choice of all church officers. Leger tells us, that the lay elders were not only elected by the people at first, but the congregations, or heads of families, appointed every year the elder, who was to represent them in the synod. But, in regard to episcopal consecration, Mr. Ackland, himself, informs us, that 'this ornament of our church-establishment, so justly cherished by us, is, unquestionably, no longer preserved among the Vaudois.' To all such assertions and surmises, therefore, we oppose what shall be now adduced from their ancient standards, the express declarations of their own historians, and the open accusations of their prelatical foes. Thus Perrin alleges,[1] that 'the monk Reinerus reported many things concerning the vocation of the pastors of the Waldenses, which are *mere fictions;* as that they had *a greater bishop* and two followers, whom he called the elder son, and the younger, and a deacon; that he laid his hands upon others with a sovereign authority, and sent them where he thought good, *like a pope.*' Reinerus also affirms,[2] that 'they considered *prelates* to be but Scribes and Pharisees; that the *pope and all the bishops* were *murderers*, because of the *wars* they waged; that they were *not to obey the bishops*, but God only; that in the church no one was greater than another; that they HATED the very NAME of PRELATE, as POPE, BISHOP, &c.' A similar statement of their views is given by Aeneas Sylvius: 'the Roman bishop, and all bishops are equal. *Amongst priests*, or *ministers of the gospel*, there is NO DIFFERENCE. The name of a presbyter does not signify a dignity, but superior merit.' Mr. Faber quotes Pilichdorf, also, saying, 'they REJECTED the *consecration of bishops*, priests, churches, altars,' &c.

We will now make some further extracts found connected with the Book on Antichrist, dated 1120, and 1126.[3] In the article on marriage and orders, it is said:[4] 'as touching orders, we ought to hold, that order is called the power which God gives to man, duly to administer or dispense unto the church the word and the sacraments. But we have nothing in the

1) In Powell, on Apost. Succ. p. 181, 2d. ed.

2) In ibid, p. 181.

3) See the authorities in Blair's Hist. of Wald. i. p. 514. They are Morland, pp. 142–160. Perrin, l. iii. c. 1. Leger, i. p. 71, and further arguments at p. 505.

4) See Blair, ibid, p. 521.

scriptures touching such orders, as they pretend, but only the custom of the church.' Again, the article on chrism or confirmation, is as follows:[1] 'now to speak of the chrism, which they at present call the sacrament of confirmation, *having no ground at all in the scriptures*,' &c. Speaking of the Romish prelacy it says,[2] 'his ministers are called false prophets, lying teachers, ministers of darkness, a spirit of error, the whore in the Revelation, the mother of fornications, clouds without water, withered trees, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, waves of the raging sea, wandering planets, Balaamites and Egyptians.' 'And, therefore, let every one take notice, that antichrist could not come in any wise, but all these forementioned things must needs meet together, to make up a complete hypocrisy and falsehood, namely, the worldly-wise men, *the religious orders*, the pharisees, ministers, doctors, the secular power, with the worldly people conjoined. He wanted yet those hypocritical ministers, and human ordinances, and the outward show of those religious orders.' Again, to pass by other quotations, it is said, 'he covers his iniquity by the length or succession of time, and allegeth that he is maintained by certain wise and learned men, and by religious orders of certain votaries of single life, men and women, virgins and widows; and besides by a numberless people, of whom, it is said in the Revelation, 'that power is given him over every tribe, language, and nation, and all that dwell on the earth shall worship him.' In the third place, he covers his iniquity by the spiritual authority of the apostles, (that is, the claim of apostolical succession,) against which the apostle speaketh expressly, 'we are able to do nothing against the truth, there is no power given us for destruction.'[3]

We now go back to their earliest document, 'the celebrated 'Nobla Leycon,' a metrical exposition of scripture doctrine, which exhibits its date, A. D. 1100, in a line of the poem:

'It is now the completion of the eleventh hundred year.'

From the character also of the writing, the structure of the language, and other internal marks of antiquity, it has been pronounced by competent judges to be a document of that period.[4] In this it is said, that Christ 'called the twelve apostles, which were *rightly* so named.'[5] The office of pastors is thus described:[6]

1) See Blair's Hist. Wald. i. p. 522.
2) Ibid, pp. 505, 506.
3) Ibid, p. 509.
4) See Dr. Gilly's Vallenses, p. 9, and Blair Hist. Wald. i. p. 473.
5) Blair, ibid, p. 478.
6) Ibid, p. 482.

'For I dare say, and it is very true,
That all the popes which have been, from Sylvester to this present,
And all cardinals, bishops, abbots, and the like,
Have no power to absolve or pardon
Any creature so much as one mortal sin;
It is God alone, who pardons, and no other.
But this ought they to do who are pastors,
They ought to preach to the people, and pray with them,
And feed them often with divine doctrine,
And chastise the sinners with discipline,
Namely, by declaring that they ought to repent.'

Finally, we refer to their 'catechism,' dated also in the year A. D. 1100.[1] 'What is your faith,' asks the question. 'The true catholic and apostolic faith,' is the answer. Again, 'Dost thou believe[2] in the holy church?' 'No, for it is a creature; but I believe that there is one.' 'What is that which thou believest, concerning the holy church?' 'I say, that the church is considered two manner of ways, the one substantially, and the other ministerially. As it is considered substantially, by the holy catholic church, is meant, all the elect of God, from the beginning of the world to the end, by the grace of God through the merit of Christ, gathered together by the Holy Spirit, and foreordained to eternal life; the number and names of whom are known to Him alone who has elected them. And, finally, in this church remains none who is reprobate. But the church as it is considered, according to the truth of the ministry, is the company of the ministers of Christ, together with the people committed to their charge, using the ministry by faith, hope, and charity.' 'By what dost thou know the church of Christ?' 'By the ministers lawfully called, and by the people participating in the truth of the ministry.' 'By what marks knowest thou the ministers?' 'By the true sense of faith, by sound doctrine, by a life of good example, and by the preaching of the gospel, and by a due administration of the sacraments.' 'By what marks knowest thou the false ministers?' 'By their fruits, by their blindness, by their evil works, by their perverse doctrine, and by their undue administration of the sacraments.' 'By what knowest thou their blindness?' 'When, not knowing the truth which necessarily appertains to salvation, they observe human inventions as ordinances of God, of whom it is verified what Isaiah says, and which is alleged by our Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 15, 'this people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the com-

1) Blair's Hist. Wald. i. p. 484. 2) Ibid, p. 486.

mandments of men.'' 'By what marks is the undue administration of the sacraments known?' 'When the priests, not knowing the intention of Christ in the sacrament, say, that the grace and the truth is included in the external ceremonies, and persuade men to the participation of the sacrament, without the truth of faith, of hope, and of charity. But the Lord chargeth those who are his to take heed of false prophets, saying, beware of the pharisees,' &c.

We need add nothing to what has been adduced. The presbyterian character of the Waldensian churches, both now and at all times, is indubitable:[1] and the attempt to derive, as prelatists do, a divine right for prelacy, through them, is nothing less than a solemn farce.

1) On the subject of the Waldenses, the reader is referred to Blair's Hist of the Waldenses, Edinb. 1833. 2 vols. 8vo. Jones's Hist. of the Waldenses, Lond. 1816, 2 vols. 8vo. Dr. Allix on the Churches of Piedmont, and Remarks on the Ancient Churches of the Albicanses. Sims's Historical Def. of the Waldenses. Faber's Vallenses and Albigenses. Dr. Wilson's Prim. Govt. of the Ch. pp. 211, 218, &c. Gilly's Waldensian Researches, and Vallenses. Powell on the Apost. Succ. Plea for Presbyterianism, &c.

# CHAPTER III.

THE ANTIQUITY OF PRESBYTERY. THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

§ 1. *The Lollards, the Syrian, the Hussite, the Bohemian, the Episcopal in South Carolina in* 1785, *the Reformed and the Biscay churches, were also presbyterian.*

We have been challenged to produce one single church, from the days of the apostles to the period of the reformation, that was presbyterian in its polity. We have met this challenge. We have shown that ALL the churches founded by the apostles, by the apostolical fathers, and by the primitive fathers, were presbyterian, and that such also was the character of the churches in Gaul, at Alexandria, in Egypt, in Scythia, in Bavaria, in the East, in Britain, in Ireland, in Scotland, among the Culdees, the Paulicians, the Aerians, and the Waldenses. We now proceed to notice some others.

The Lollards, or followers of Wickliffe, were presbyterian. See on this subject what has been already said.[1]

The Syrian churches were presbyterian. For the evidence on this point see also our previous remarks.[2]

The churches established by the Hussites were also presbyterian. More than a century before the era of the Saxon reformation, even in the fourteenth century, protestants were found in Germany who maintained a long and obstinate struggle for their religious rights against the church of Rome, until, in 1457, they assumed the form of an independent ecclesiastical body, under the name of the United Brethren. These protestants were headed by the two celebrated martyrs, and proto-reformers, whose blood continues to cry to heaven against her who is drunk with the blood of the saints. Now that they were presbyterian, appears, first, from

1) B. iii. c. 2. 2) B. ii. c. 6.

the fact that both these reformers, Huss and Jerome of Prague, were indebted for their views of scriptural doctrine and order to the writings of Wickliffe, and how thoroughly imbued they are with the views of presbyterians we have already seen.[1] The books of Wickliffe were carried into Bohemia by Peter Payne, principal of Edmund Hall, Oxford, one of his disciples. He fled to Bohemia, where he published some books of Wickliffe, which were greatly esteemed by Huss, Jerome, and the university of Prague.[2] A young nobleman from Bohemia, who studied at Oxford, in 1389, carried with him, on his return, several tracts of Wickliffe, among which were those 'of the church;' 'against the clergy,' &c. From him Huss obtained these books, and ever afterwards maintained the doctrines they contained.[3] Secondly, from the express testimony of Huss, himself. Thus, he says, 'All good bishops and pastors are as well the apostles' successors as the pope, nay, rather, he being a wicked man. John Huff, Articul. 4. Fox, p. 590. Lambert, p. 1120. Nay, they have greater and more excellent titles, than to be called apostles' successors: for those that walk in obedience unto God's commandments, our Saviour calleth them his sisters, kinsfolk, and brethren. Matt. 12: 50. *Ergo*, the pope is not the right successor of *Peter*.'[4] The disciples also, of Huss and Jerome acted in conformity with this doctrine.[5] Æneas Sylvius (afterwards Pius the second.) speaking of the Hussites, says, 'One of the dogmas of this *pestiferous sect*, is, that there is no difference of order among those who bear the priestly office.' This account is confirmed by the historian Thuanus, who expressly speaks of their opinions as resembling those of the *English dissenters*. Huss undauntedly declaimed against the clergy, the cardinals, and even against the pope himself.[6] He wrote a long treatise about the church, in which he maintains, that the church consists of those only who are predestinate; that the head and foundation of it is Jesus Christ; that the pope and cardinals are only members of it, and the other bishops are successors to the apostles, as well as they; that no one is obliged to obey them, if their commands are not agreeable to the law of God; and that an excommunication, which is groundless,

1) See Conder's Analytic View of All Religions, p. 247.
2) Middleton's Evang. Biog. Life of Huss, vol. i. p. 30. Lond. 1816.
3) See also Bost's Hist. of the Moravians, pp. 11, 13.
4) Dr. Willet's Syn. Pap. p. 167.
5) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 138.
6) Middleton's Evang. Biog. 1, 35, 36.

hath no effect.' He wrote also three large volumes against the clergy; the first entitled, 'The Anatomy of the Members of Antichrist.' The second, 'Of the Kingdom of the People, and the Life and Manners of Antichrist.' The third, 'Of the Abomination of Priests, and Carnal Monks, in the Church of Jesus Christ.' Besides these, he wrote several other Tracts, on Traditions, The Unity of the Church, Evangelical Perfection, the Mystery of Iniquity, and the Discovery of Antichrist. He taught, also, that a prelate is no prelate while he is in mortal sin; that a bishop is no bishop, while he is in mortal sin. We thus perceive how entirely Huss agreed with Wickliffe, and how completely he repudiates the whole scheme of prelatical apostolical succession.

Thirdly. From the fact that their own writers, and their enemies, uniformly represent them as agreeing with the Waldenses, with whom, afterwards, they formed a correspondence, and a coalition. 'They began,' says Æneas Sylvius, 'to bark against all the priests; and seceding from the catholic church they embraced the impious and mad sect of the Waldenses.'[1] Fourthly, from the fact that they were subsequently merged into the Bohemian brethren, who regarded Huss as one of their fathers, according to the following verse taken from Comenius.[2]

Hussi Sancte cinis, gaude gaude inter arenas
Per sobolem toto vivis in orbe tuam,
Vivis et ostendis tandem hostibus ignea verum,
Tollere quod nequeat flamma minaxque rogus.

Dust of St. Huss rejoice in thine urn,
In us thy seed thou dost to life return,
Thou livest to show to the world that thou canst burn,
Nor can dire flames truth or thy zeal adjourn.

And, fifthly, from the express testimony of their Romish persecutors. Æneas Sylvius thus describes them.[3] 'The doctrines of the pestilential and lately damned faction are: That the chief priest of Rome is equal with other bishops; that there is no difference among priests; that priesthood is not a dignity, but that grace and virtue only give the preference; that souls separating out of the body are either immediately plunged into hell, or advanced to eternal joys; that priests ought to be poor, and only to content themselves with alms; and that every one has liberty to preach the word of God.'

1) Blair's Hist. of the Wald. vol. ii. p. 5.

2) Comenius's Exhortation to the Ch. of Bohemia. Lond. 1661, p. 2.

3) Blair's Hist. World, 2, 5. See a very interesting history of this persecuted people, in this work, c. i. and ii. See also Bost's Hist. of the Moravians, ch. i. and ii.

This leads us to observe, that the Bohemian church was essentially presbyterian. Comenius, the last bishop who survived 'the savage tyranny' of popery, and 'the systematic extirpation of protestantism throughout those countries which have been called 'the Goshen of the middle ages,'[1] styles the Bohemian 'one of the ancientest, soundest, purest churches in the world.'[2] He relates its origin as follows. 'This is,' saith our author, and Reginvolecus, and Æneas Sylvius, who proved afterward pope Pius, and differ but little from him, 'that Illyricum planted by the great doctor of the Gentiles, (Rom. 15: 19.) this is that Dalmatia watered by his son and evangelist Titus, (2 Tim. 4: 10.) This is that people which Irenæus, their neighbor, commends with this eulogy, that they never did either believe or teach otherwise than as the apostles and disciples. This is that (afterward called Slavonick church) where Hieronym was born, and where he and some of the Greek fathers, Cyril, and Methodius, bestowed their pious labors in the service of the gospel. Of this came those oriental churches, out from which, by the means of the said worthies, the gospel was transmitted into Croatia, Bosnia, Moravia, Polonia, and Bohemia, where this church took root most, till in the year 1450, it ran up to an head, and fruit, and was formed into the unity of the brethren of Bohemia by Wicklifle, Jerome of Prague, and especially John Huss, from whom they were called Hussites.'

That the Bohemian church recognised an office similar to that found among the Waldenses, which implied general presidency and supervision over the other clergy, and also permanency, is granted; and that they called the incumbent of this office bishop is also admitted. But this, as we have fully seen, does not constitute the essence of prelacy, nor is it inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the presbyterian system.[3] For unless this office was believed to be of divine appointment, to be superior to that of the presbyterate, and to possess rights and powers independent of the presbyters, it does not prove the system of which it forms a part to be prelatical. What, then, was the character of this episcopacy? Let Comenius answer.[4] 'He presents us,' says Tunarchus, who introduces his work, 'with a moderate, godly episcopacy, wherein we have a bishop. 1. A degree for order, not of order. 2. For labor, not secular dignity,

1) Conder's Analytic View of All Religions, pp. 249, 250.
2) Ibid.
3) Lect. on the Apost. Succ. Lect. ii.
4) Ibid, as above, pp. 6, 7.

dominion, not domination. 3. Having no more power but what is freely delegated and devolved on him by the election and consent of the ministers, not some, but all concerned. 4. Performing ordination ordinarily, in a general synod, and jurisdiction in an ecclesiastical senate, to which he himself is subject. 5. Not countenancing mal-administration, by admitting any unworthy person to orders or the Lord's supper. 6. Without the leaven of Arminianism, page 52. 7. Promoting the vigilancy of pastors in the exercise of discipline.' These bishops, they called 'antistes,'[1] and 'compresbyters,'[2] and 'superintendents.'[3] Comenius acknowledges that bishop and presbyter are the same by divine right.[4] He says, that when deliberating about perpetuating the succession of the ministry, before they concluded to send to the Waldenses,[5] 'they remembered that Rokyzan did often affirm, professedly, that all things must be reformed, to the very foundations; that, therefore, ordination was to be set on foot at home, by that power which Christ hath given to his church. That while they had some ordained among them, they should ordain others, and they again others still, to succeed them; and their desires much inclined this way, as also their judgments. But there was one thing which did strike their hearts with some fear, whether that ordination would be legitimate enough if a presbyter ordain a presbyter without a bishop, and how they should be able to defend such ordination, if it should be called in question, either amongst others or their own.'

That the brethren fully believed in the divine right and validity of presbyterian ordination, and only sought episcopal in conformity to the current prejudices of the age, is positively asserted by their bishop and historian, the Rev. John Holmes.[6] In order to discuss the very point suggested by Comenius, a synod was called in 1467. 'In this assembly,' says Mr. Holmes,[7] 'two questions were principally agitated. The first was, whether ordination by a number of presbyters, was equally valid with that performed by a bishop? The decision was to this effect: that presbyterian ordination was consonant to apostolic practice, 1 Tim. 4: 14, and the usage of the primitive church, which might be proved from the writings of the primitive fathers; consequently, the newly-

1) Comenius, ibid, p. 46.
2) Ibid, p. 56.
3) Ibid, p. 38.
4) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 139.
5) Comenius, ibid, pp. 36, 37.
6) See also Bost's Hist. of the Moravians, p. 49.
7) Hist. of the United Brethren, vol. i. pp. 50 – 53.

elected ministers might be ordained by those now exercising the sacred functions of the gospel among them, and who had previously been calixtine clergymen, in *priest's* orders. But as for many ages no ordination had been deemed valid in the reigning church, unless performed by a bishop, they resolved to use every possible means for obtaining episcopal ordination; that their enemies might thus be deprived of every pretext for discrediting the ministry among them.' In seeking this episcopacy, they went to the Waldenses, the character of whose bishops we have seen, and in what estimation they stood among prelatists: and there they received ordination at the hands of one man. But we are not left to inferences. Their own Book of Order or Discipline, page 20,[1] has the following express words: 'it is true, the Bohemians have certain bishops or superintendents, who are conspicuous for age and gifts; and chosen by the suffrages of all the ministers, for the keeping of order, and to see that all the rest do their office. Four, five, or six have they, as need requires; and each of these has his diocese. But the dignity of these above other ministers, is not founded in the prerogative of honors or revenues, but of labors and cares for others. And, according to the apostles' rules, a presbyter and bishop are one and the same thing.'

Their Book of Order, called 'Ratio Disciplinæ Ordinisque,' &c., was first adopted in 1616, and again in 1632. It was reprinted by Comenius, in 1660. In his notes added to it,[2] Comenius says, 'presbyter, (a greek word, which in latin signifies *seniorem, elder*,) is given by the apostles, both to the pastors of the church, and also to their assistants, in watching the flock, *who do not labor in word and doctrine*.' He also says, 'it is questioned if it be better that the presidency be stated or ambulatory.'[3] He further affirms,[4] 'that these superintendents are not to have worldly wealth nor honors, nor coercive power over others: but to be subject to all, as every one is to them. Thus, (saith he,) to the seniors of the Bohemian brethren, there was associated one or two conseniors; and even from these joined together, an account of their actings was required by synodical authority, neither did they sit in secular courts and judicatories.'

The following extracts from their confession of faith and religion, presented to Ferdinand, king of Bohemia, in 1535, and previously to Uladislaus, in 1508, will confirm what has

1) Dr. Miller on the Min. p. 354.
2) See Plea for Presbytery, pp. 356, 357.
3) Annot. ad. ord. Eccl. Bohem. p. 87.
4) Ibid, p. 89.

been said. In article 9, on the overseers or ministers, it is taught,[1] 'that the ministers of the church, to whom the administration of the words and sacraments is committed, ought to be rightly ordained according to the rule prescribed by the Lord and his apostles. And for undertaking this office, that, from among the godly and faithful people, men may be called, full of faith and without blame, having gifts necessary for this ministry, besides an honest conversation of life, and that these be first of all tried; then after prayer, *made by the elders*, that they be by imposition of hands for this office, confirmed in the congregation.' 'But if it happen among us, that any one of the order of priests fall into any crime or error, or that he is negligent of his duty, he is at first admonished in a paternal manner, then he is corrected by brotherly chastisement, who, if he contends to be pertinacious, and to despise the admonitions of the brethren and of the whole church, he is first deprived of all ecclesiastical ministry and office, he is also afterwards excluded from the communion of the church itself.' Again, in article 26, on pastors, after describing the wickedness of the Romish ministers, it is said,[2] 'by diabolical ambition and tyranny, they have attributed to themselves the dominion almost of the whole world. They usurp the power and authority of princes; having deserted their proper office, which was to feed the flock of God, to oversee it; not unwillingly, but with a ready and prompt mind, on account of God; but not to occupy empire over the clergy, even as that threefold crown of antichrist sufficiently declares, *the kingdom also of bishops and abbots*, who at last shall receive the reward of their iniquity.' That these churches fully concurred with ours, on the subject of ruling elders, will appear from the following extracts from the 'Ratio Disciplinæ,' &c., by Comenius.[3] In the first chapter, we have an account of the elders, 'presbyteri seu sensores morum.' 'The elders are honest, grave, pious men, chosen out of the whole congregation, for this end, that they may see to the good conversation of all the rest.' In page 23, it is said, 'when ministers are to be ordained in an assembly, each pastor, who is to bring his deacon or deacons along with him, acquaints his church, *that is, the elders, or censors of manners*, who, by their letters to the assembly, give a testimonial of the life and conversation of his deacon, &c. In page 36, we are told, before giving notice of the holy

1) Blair's Hist. of Wald. vol. ii. pp. 576–578, where the whole may be found.

2) Blair, p. 604.

3) See Plea for Presb. p. 356.

supper, the pastor calls the eldership, and asks if the holy communion may be appointed at this or that time. If there be any impediments,' &c. As to its observance, 'with due reverence, first the pastor, with such ministers of the church, as are present, draw near, then the magistrates, then the church elders, (seniores ecclesiæ seu presbyteri,) and afterwards the rest of the people: one or two of the elders (uno et altero presbyteris) taking care that there be no indecency.' These elders are regularly ordained. 'The ordination of elders, when required, is thus performed: all the men are ordered to present themselves early, before the evening sermon, and there an admonition being given by the visiters, (præmissa a visitatoribus admonitione,) they choose, by free votes, whom they judge worthy of that office. They who are chosen by a plurality of votes, after evening sermon is ended, are called forth by the visiter, and the duties of their office (all the assembly listening) are read to them. And they, by word and with the lifted hand, promise to the bishops of the unity, (antistatibus unitatis,) to the pastor and to the church, faithfulness and diligence. And that in the church also they may discharge the duty of watchmen, they are honored with a peculiar seat, that they may the more conveniently see the people.'

To what has been adduced in the way of positive testimony, we may add the opinion of Dr. Heylin, the most bigoted of prelatists, and one of the greatest of all defamers of purity and truth. In the History of Presbyterians, he says,[1] 'about the year 1400, we find a strong party to be raised amongst the Bohemians, against some superstitions and corruptions in the church of Rome; occasioned, as some say, by reading the works of Wickliffe, and by the diligence of Picardus, a Fleming, as is affirmed by some others, from whom they had the name of Picards. By which confession it appears, that they ascribe no power to the civil magistrate, in the concernments of the church; that they had fallen upon a way of ordaining ministers amongst themselves, without recourse unto the bishop, or any such superior officer, as a superintendent; and, finally, that they retained the use of excommunication, and other ecclesiastical censures, for the chastising of irregular and scandalous persons.'

Æneas Sylvius might be quoted to the same purpose,[2] and also Howell,[3] but it is needless. It is only necessary to add,

1) Dr. Miller on the Min. pp. 354, 355.

2) Orig. et Gest. Bohem. ch. liii. in Jameson's Cyp. Isot. p. 299.

3) Fam. Letters, vol. iii. p. 295, in ibid.

that their form of discipline was approved by Bucer, Luther, Calvin, P. Martyr, Musculus, Zanchius, Beza, &c.[1] Of Calvin, Comenius says, that such was his admiration of their discipline, that when 'called to exercise his ministry at Geneva, he erected this kind of discipline, and it is famous at this day in all the world.'[2]

The Moravian churches are also presbyterian. The churches of Moravia united with those of Bohemia, in 1457, in forming 'The United Brethren.' All, therefore, that has been offered in proof of the essential presbyterianism of that church, applies of course to them. After the extinction of the ancient church in 1627, these churches seemed dead, until, in the year 1715, a great revival sprung up, like a phœnix from the buried ashes, in different parts of Moravia, which resulted in the establishment at Herrnhut, and the organization of the present Moravian church.[3] The ecclesiastical principles of this church, as far as they are connected with our present subject, are these, as given by the Rev. A. Bost, of Geneva, in his History.[4] In article 2, 'of the Presbytery or Consistory,' it is said, 'from the brethren of the last class, (that is, those who have given full evidence of their piety,) were chosen, in every church, by a plurality of votes, the elders, from three to eight in number, in proportion to the size of the church. The men selected for this office were pious, grave, upright, and such as were a pattern to their own families in all things; and they always acted in concert with the pastor, for whose maintenance it was their business to provide, laboring with him, at the same time, for the spiritual improvement of the flock. They unitedly devised means for promoting love among the members of the church, preventing every kind of disorder, and correcting, as soon as possible, without publicity, the evils they might discover. Once in three months, they visited the houses of the brethren, in order to observe the conduct of each member of the family; to ascertain whether every one was laboring diligently in his calling; whether those who were in trade conducted their affairs aright; whether family worship was kept up; whether such as filled public stations acquitted themselves faithfully, &c. Of all these things they made a report to the pastor. They assisted the poor, with money contributed by the members of the church, and deposited in a box for that purpose.

1) See in Comenius's Exhort. as above.
2) Ibid, p. 49.
3) Bost's Hist. of Morav. Ch. vii.
4) Ibid, ch. vi. p. 129, &c. See also Concise Hist. Acct. ii. § 21, and Conder's Analytic View, p. 253.

This was in addition to the general collections on festivals, and fast days, and at the Lord's supper. Brethren appointed for the purpose kept the account of this money. Four times in the year they made other collections, to defray the expenses of the worship of God, and the maintenance of poor ministers, or for persons banished for the sake of the gospel. Every year they gave an account to the church, of the receipts and expenditures. The elders also visited the sick, and gave them exhortations and advice, particularly applicable to their circumstances. The women also had among them female elders, who, as mothers in the house of God, watched over the widows, married women, and younger females, exhorting them to peace and purity.

In reference 'to the officers of the church,' it is said, 'the administration[1] of the word and sacraments is performed either by ministers who have received ordination from bishops of the church, of the brethren, *or by such as have been ordained in the Lutheran or Calvinist church.*' 'The brethren improve these external church privileges, and the liberty connected with them, in having the ministers of their church ordained by their own bishops; but the direction of the unity of the brethren, in general, or that of individual congregations, *is not committed to the bishops, as such;* but they, as well as the presbyters and deacons ordained by them, and the ministers who have received Lutheran *or Calvinist* ordination, together with all other servants of the congregation of the brethren, are subordinate to a board of conference *of elders*, appointed by the general synod, to whom the direction of the whole of the unity of the brethren is intrusted, *and without commission from whom bishops are not empowered to ordain.* But all ordinations by the Lutheran or Calvinist churches established by law in different countries, are admitted *as equally valid* with those of the church of the brethren. The superiority of the bishop did not consist in greater honor or higher salary, but in a greater measure of labor and responsibility. Every bishop was bound to refer all important matters to the judgment of his colleagues; and this union of bishops formed the ecclesiastical council. From this, there was an appeal to the general synod, *whose* decision was final. Every bishop had two or three co-bishops, who had seats in the ecclesiastical council, and assisted, or if necessary supplied the place, of the bishops.' 'The synods, which are held every three or four years, are composed of the

1) Concise Hist. Account, p. 24. Conder, pp. 254–256.

bishops, with their co-bishops, the civil seniors, and 'such servants of the church, and of the congregations of the brethren, as are called to the synod by the former elder's conference, appointed by the previous synod, or commissioned to attend it as deputies from particular congregations; together with, (in Germany,) the lords or ladies of the manors, or proprietors of the land on which regular settlements are erected, provided they be members of the unity. From one synod to another, the direction of the external and internal affairs of the church of the brethren is committed to a board, consisting of bishops and elders chosen by the synod, and individually confirmed by lot, which bears the name of 'The Elder's Conference of the Unity of the Brethren.''

In the form of discipline presented by Mr. Bost, a full, detailed account is given of the duties of 'the pastor,[1] the deacons, the acolythes, (or young candidates for the ministry,) and of the bishops. The bishops 'were nominated by the ministers, but not *reordained*.[2] They may be dismissed from their office again, as seven have been on account of illness.[3] To these testimonies we will only refer to the declarations of Spangenberg, in his 'Exposition of Christian Doctrine as taught in the Protestant Church of the United Brethren.'[4]

We would further add, according to the evidence already presented, that all the reformed churches, throughout Europe and America, with the single exceptions of the Romish mother and the Anglican daughter, are presbyterian.

Heylin also informs us,[5] 'that the people of Biscay, in Spain, admitted of no bis hopsto come among them; for when Ferdinand, the catholic, came in progress, accompanied among others with the bishop of Pampelone, the people rose up in arms, drove back the bishop, and gathering up all the dust which they thought he had trod on, flung it into the sea. Which story, had it been only recorded by him, would have been of higher credit. But we read the same in a Spanish chronicle, who saith more than the doctor, for he tells us that the people threw that dust that the bishop or his mule had trod on into the sea, with curses and imprecations; which certainly, saith he, was not done without some mystery, those people not being void of religion, but superstitiously devout, as the rest of the Spaniards are; 'so that

1) P. 132–135.
2) P. 138.
3) P. 139.
4) Transl. by La Trobe, 2d ed. Bath, 1796, pp. 417, 429.
5) Geogr. p. 55, in Smectymnuus, p. 17.

there is one congregation in the christian world in which this government hath met with contradiction.

The episcopal churches in South Carolina were all presbyterian in 1785, that is, they held to the order of presbyters as alone sufficient to perpetuate the succession of the ministry. This will appear from the following facts:[1] that 'early in 1785 the clergy of South Carolina met, and agreed to send delegates to the next general meeting, but in complying with the invitation to coöperate in the measures necessary to effect a general union, they accompanied their compliance with an unequivocal proof of their sense of the independence of the South Carolina church, for they annexed to it an understanding 'that *no bishop* was to be settled in that state.' In fact, bishop White admits, that such was 'the opposition to the very principle of episcopacy,' then existing in South Carolina, that it was only by proposing to them the above declaration and express proviso against bishops, they were induced to unite in the organization at all.[2]

## § 2. *The presbyterian church the oldest of all others.*

From the reviews we have now taken, it appears, that the presbyterian church is the oldest of all others. If we trace the visible church up to its original organization in the covenant made with Abraham, we find a ministerial parity.[3] If we contemplate it as it was reconstructed under Moses, we find but one order of ministers; the priests having one of their own body, chosen by themselves, and without reordination, set over them as their president, and having also ruling elders chosen from among the laity. In one form or other our church has existed from the very beginning of time, and carried a multitude of souls safely through to the port of heaven. Like a river, now narrow and now expanded and still increasing, it has ever flowed along, bearing on its wave, innumerable blessings.[4] To the presbyterian church may, in truth, be applied the eloquent tribute paid to the Jew: 'Talk of pedigrees, forsooth! — tell us of the Talbots, Percys, Howards, and such like mushrooms of yesterday! — show us a presbyterian, and we will show you a man whose spiritual genealogical tree springs from Abraham's bosom — whose

1) See my Lect. on the Apost. Succ. p. 508.

2) Memoirs of the Prot. Ep. Ch. pp. 78, 91.

3) See Dr. Mason's Wks. vol. iv. Essays on the Church of God.

4) See Lect. on the Headship of Christ, p. 29.

christian doctrine and the order of his church are older than the decalogue, and who bears incontrovertible evidence of the authenticity of his descent, through myriads of successive generations.'[1]

Let us now pass from the church, as it existed in these earlier developments, to the church of Christ, in its pure, primitive, virgin, and apostolic form, when as yet unpolluted by a single stain of human corruption, and unincumbered by one device of weak and erring men. Let us walk about Zion, as she sits, a city set on a hill, built upon the rock of ages; her foundation apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being her chief corner-stone; fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners; her God in the midst of her; His Spirit dwelling in her; her sons and daughters filled with the unction of the Holy One; the joy of her friends, and the terror and admiration of her foes. Let us seek the sure marks of this bride, the Lamb's wife, in all the freshness and beauty of her maiden simplicity; and we find her clad in those very garments, and holding forth those very doctrines, which are now known by the general denomination of presbyterianism.

And since there can be nothing before what is first, or purer than what is purity itself; or more ancient than antiquity; or more apostolic than apostolicity; or more sacred than the very teachings of divinity; therefore must we conclude, that of all forms of christianity, in doctrine and in polity, that which is known by this general and comprehensive title is the most ancient and the best of all. Let others quarrel, whether their dogmas took rise in this century or that; or were sustained by this council or another; or may be traced in this antiquated relic, or in some other traditionary lore; we, ancienter than all councils, and older than all fathers, can calmly witness the eagerness with which they pursue their antiquarian researches, safe housed in that temple not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God.

Jerusalem, the mother of all churches, the first-born of Christ, and the fountain of all succession, was a presbyterian church. Antioch, the mother of all the Gentile churches, and constructed by the united agency of the apostles, Peter and Paul, was, we have seen, also presbyterian. The whole multitude of churches, founded by apostolic men; all the churches in the post-apostolic age; all the churches in the primitive era of christianity; the churches of Alexandria, of Gaul, of Scythia, of the Goths, of the Illyrians, of the

1) Blackwood's Magazine.

Britons, of the Irish, and of the Scots; the churches of the Aerians, the Paulicians, the Waldenses, the Bohemians, the Moravians, the Biscayans, the Syrians; ALL — all are found to have held fast to that presbyterian faith once delivered to the saints.

Our ark of hope! though wild the waves
Of Sin and Error round thee roll,
And o'er thy path the tempest raves,
To turn thee from thy destined goal;—
'Tis cheering, through the gloom, to see
Thy gospel banner wide unfurled,
Above the storm wave fearlessly,
The refuge of a ruined world.

Borne on the fleeting stream of Time,
Through buried ages thou hast past,
And in thy onward course sublime,
Attained our distant day at last;
No trace of Eld's corroding tooth
Upon thy glorious form appears,
But radiant with immortal youth,
It floats amid the wreck of years.

Nations now see thy cheering light,
And own its kindling power divine,
Who long in Error's dreary night,
Have knelt at some unholy shrine;
Led by thy mild and steady ray,
In thronging multitudes they come,
Thy fair proportions to survey,
And find in thee a peaceful home.

Secure within thy hallowed walls,
O'er life's tempestuous sea we glide,
Nor heed the storm which idly falls
In angry surges on thy side;
For HE, who saved the timid band
Once rudely tossed on Galilee,
Will still extend his mighty hand
And spread his guardian care o'er thee.

§ 3. *The presbyterian church the oldest of all the western reformed churches, including the Romish; with an answer to the objection, 'Where was the presbyterian church before Luther?'*

As a church, in an organized form, holding to the doctrines, discipline, and government of Christ, the presbyterian church has existed, therefore, to say the least, *as long* as any other extant denomination of christians. Do we go back to the earliest period of the reformation, we find the leaders of that glorious epoch in the history of the church, *with almost entire unanimity*, concurring in the adoption and establishment of presbyterian principles, a fact *inexplicable* on any other

ground, than that of the clear and undeniable development of them in God's holy word. The reformed churches in France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Geneva, and Scotland, were all based upon a presbyterian platform. The English church *alone*, of *all* protestant christendom, was fashioned after the prelatic model, not by her ministers, but by her civil and supreme head. The presbyterian form of church government was found in actual operation in Switzerland, as even the episcopal historian, Milner, testifies, as early as the year 1528. The confession used in the English church in Geneva was received and approved by the church of Scotland at the very beginning of the reformation.[1] What is usually denominated the Scottish Confession of Faith and Doctrine, was authorized, as a doctrine grounded upon the infallible word of God, August, 1560. The First Book of Discipline was drawn up by John Knox, and subscribed and approved in January, 1561. This work the church travailed to perfect and complete, between the years 1564 and 1581; and it speaks forth, in its most excogitated form, the sentiments of the early reformers in Scotland, as with a unanimous voice.

The first presbytery in England was organized at Wandsworth, in 1572. It was composed of Mr. Field, lecturer of Wandsworth, Mr. Smith, of Mitcham, Mr. Crane, of Roehampton, Messrs. Wilcox, Standen, Jackson, Bonham, Saintloe, and Edmonds, to whom were afterwards joined Messrs. Travers, Chake, Barber, Gardiner, Crook, Egerton, and a number of distinguished laymen. On the twentieth of November, eleven *elders* were chosen, and their offices described, in a register entitled 'the orders of Wandsworth,' (Neal, i. 198.) 'This,' says Neal, 'was the first presbyterian church in England.' The probability is, that a presbytery was organized, and also a church constituted, at the same time. There certainly were Dutch churches which adopted the presbyterian government long before this. Fuller mentions fifteen ministers who belonged to this first presbytery, as Neal has done in the passage quoted above. It is very improbable, that fifteen ministers and eleven elders belonged to one church, which was compelled to hold its meetings secretly; the only correct conclusion is, that it was a presbytery, and not a single church. This conclusion is warranted by the fact, that, on the eighth of May, 1582, there was a synod of threescore ministers.

1) See in Irving's Conf. p. 125.

The ecclesiastical discipline observed and practiced in the churches of Jersey and Guernsey, after the reformation of the same, by the *ministers*, *elders*, and *deacons* of the isles of Guernsey, Jersey, Sark, and Aldernay, was confirmed by the authority and in the presence of the governors of said isles, in a synod, held in Guernsey, in 1576; and was afterwards received by the said *ministers* and *elders*, and confirmed by the said governors, in a synod held in Jersey, October, 1577. (Heylin, fol. edit. Lond. p. 239.) These churches were composed chiefly of Huguenots, who fled from France on account of the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24th, 1572.

In the year 1647, the Westminster Confession, — which is so termed because drawn up by the assembly of divines called by the long parliament in the reign of Charles I. and which continued its deliberations for five years, — was adopted by the church of Scotland, as a platform of communion with the church in England. This standard, embracing the catechisms, form of government, and directory for worship, continues to be held as the confession of the faith and practice of our churches, until this day; although, as received by the presbyterian church in America, it has been modified so as to be fully adapted to the genius of our free and republican institutions.

Now when we turn to the church of England, as a reformed church, we find that the thirty-nine articles, which contain her doctrinal confession, were first passed in the convocation, and confirmed by royal authority in 1562. They were afterwards ratified anew in 1571, and again in the reign of Charles I. The liturgy was first composed in 1547, and was finally amended in 1661.

If, again, we consider the claims of the Romish church, in its *reformed* or rather, as we think, in its *deformed* character, we find that it can date no further back than the period of the Tridentine council, which was closed in the year 1563, under the pontificate of Pius IV. The professed object of this famous council was, to *reform* ecclesiastical abuses, and definitively settle the faith of that sect. The bull of confirmation of this council was signed on January 26, 1564. On the 9th of December, 1563, pope Pius IV. drew up and recorded in the apostolic chancery his bull, which contains and sets forth 'the present, true, real, and ONLY DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC AND AUTHORIZED CREED of the holy catholic and apostolic church, the mother and mistress of churches.' This creed is based upon the canons and decrees of the council of Trent. By this creed, which

every Roman catholic bishop, priest, and convert is obliged to profess, there is an express acknowledgment made of the œcumenical character of the synod of Trent, and a profession of obedience to its decrees.[1] The Romish missal, the Romish prayer-book, was drawn up by certain fathers, chosen for that purpose, towards the close of the council of Trent, in 1562. It was not sanctioned and promulgated until 1570, by a bull of pope Pius V, bearing date the 12th of January in that year.[2]

This, then, is the present and only authorized and distinctive creed, by which the Romish church is distinguished from all others, as an ecclesiastical organization. Besides this, that church, as Roman, never had any other authorized and established creed. Although, for centuries previous, she had held forth practically many of her present false and dangerous tenets, yet it was only as opinions, and not as defined and determinate articles of the faith, of which a distinct acknowledgment was required, as necessary to salvation. 'Previously to the reformation,' says Mr. Palmer, 'we do not observe any clear and undoubted decisions of the western synods, which compelled the Latin churches to receive doctrines at variance with those taught by our catholic and apostolic churches.'[3] The synod of Trent defined and made necessary these several articles of faith, and pope Pius IV, embodied the whole in his creed, which is now the constitutional confession of the Romish church. It will be of no avail to reply, that the Romish church ever held and maintained the several creeds known as the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian, or the creeds adopted by the councils of Nice, Chalcedon, Constantinople, and Ephesus; for these she held not as Roman, but as christian; not as peculiar to her, but in com-

1) 'And all other things, likewise, do I undoubtedly receive and confess, which are delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and especially the holy council of Trent; and withal, I condemn, reject, and accurse, all things that are contrary hereunto, and all heresies whatsoever condemned, rejected, and accursed by the church; and I will be careful, that this true catholic faith, (out of which no man can be saved, which at this time I willingly profess and truly hold,) be constantly, (with God's help,) retained and confessed, whole and inviolate, to the last gasp; and by those that are under me, or such as I shall have charge over in my calling, holden, taught, and preached to the uttermost of my power; I, the said N, promise, vow, and swear, so God help me, and his holy gospels. It shall not be lawful, therefore, for any man to infringe this our will and commandment, or by audacious boldness to contradict the same. Which, if any man shall presume to attempt, let him know that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, his blessed apostles.'

2) Odenheimer's Orig. of the Prayer Book, p. 91.

3) Palmer on the Ch. vol. ii. p. 237. See also a very able argument on this subject, by Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, in his Magazine for Nov. 1839.

mon with all other orthodox churches: and because to these, doctrinally considered, the other reformed churches, as well as the Romish, also hold, and only differ from her in protesting, as did many in every age of the church, against doctrines and practices contrary to these, and subversive of the true faith and order of the gospel. Now, so long as these things were not defined as articles of faith, and not enforced, as of necessity to be believed, they, by whom they were rejected, were satisfied with rejecting or protesting against them; but when, by this new established creed, they were enforced and made *necessary*, all who could not in conscience submit, were obliged utterly to separate from any responsible connection with an apostate church. The papal bull was Rome's bill of divorce, addressed to the pure church of Jesus Christ, and the church accepted it, that she might thenceforth hold only from her head, who is in heaven.[1]

The church of Rome, therefore, is *younger* than most of the churches of the reformation. Her creed is more novel than that of the Lutherans, which was presented at the diet of Augsburgh, in 1530; of Geneva, which was even earlier: of the four cities, dated 1530; of Basle, published in 1532; of the Bohemian confession, compiled from the ancient confessions of the Waldenses, and exhibited in 1532; of the Helvetic, drawn up in 1536; of the Saxon, prepared in the year 1551; of the French confession, drawn up by Calvin, and adopted in the synod of Paris in the year 1559; of the Belgic, prepared and published in 1561; of the Scottish, exhibited and authorized in 1560; of the English, which was completed in 1562, under Elizabeth, by the publication by the convocation of the thirty-nine articles, Jewell's Apology, and Nowell's Catechism.

Thus baseless are the pretensions to antiquity, and thus vain the arrogant assumption of supremacy, which are most absurdly asserted by the Romish church; the latest most novel, and most corrupted of all the churches of the reformation, a church whose creed is irreconcilably opposed to the creeds of the early church, whether Roman, Anglican, or oriental, and contrary to those now embraced by all christendom beside.

'By their fruits ye shall know them.' On the tree of popery we find growing, in all that fertility which is peculiar to error, seven sacraments, seven orders of ministers, metropolitans, patriarchs, and a pope. But where, in all the New Test-

1) De Aubigne, vol. ii. p. 124.

ament, is there any colorable pretext for fathering upon it such an offspring as this? 'If,' says Jewell,[1] 'to have wandered from the word of God, the commands of Christ, the institutions of the apostles, the examples of the primitive church, the canons and decrees of the ancient fathers and councils; nay, even from its own positive enactments; if to be bound by no laws, ancient or modern, domestic or foreign, human or divine; if in this consists errors, *then* is the church of Rome not infallible; *then* has she been guilty of the most flagrant crime, the most shameful conduct.'

It is most insultingly affirmed, that 'the presbyterian scheme was invented in the sixteenth century,'[2] and we are asked where in all the world it existed prior to that time? Now of this query, we would say, it smells strong of the old and long buried challenge of Rome, 'where was your church before Luther?' Our answer, therefore, may be the same as that given to this preposterous question — 'it was where prelacy never was, and never will be found, — in the Bible.' And if *there*, then the question has but little remaining interest as a guide to any authoritative decision, since we are abundantly satisfied with the foundation of apostles and prophets, and are quite willing to act under Christ's commission, and with apostolic benediction, however we may be denied the sanction of Romish, or of Anglican prelates.

Where was presbytery before the reformation? It was in the Bible. It was, as we have seen, in the understanding and the hearts of some of the wisest of the schoolmen; of some of the best and most learned of the fathers; and of all the primitive fathers; it was found, in later times, in Germany, with Huss, of Prague; in England, with Wickliffe, and the Lollards; in Europe, with the Albigenses, and the Waldenses; and in India, with the Syrian churches. In remoter times, we find it in the same communities, and with other individuals. And in the *truly* primitive and early ages of the church, we find it at Alexandria; in Scotland, and in Ireland; while there is nothing to disprove the fact that it was then, in truth, the *quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod ab omnibus*. That we have in the reformation freed the church from the novelties of popery, and the more inveterate disease of prelacy, cannot surely extinguish the life of the true primitive and apostolic church. Till the reformation, the church, in great part, professed the true rule of faith, and held to the true and real

1) Apol. p. 180.

2) Perceval, on Apostolic Succ. p. 61, and others.

ministry — but in addition to this, it clung also to the corruptions of popery, and the super-additions of prelacy. Now these corruptions and additions we have removed, as obscuring the glory of the sanctuary, and binding, as with a deadening ligament, the body of the church. We have, *at great cost*, cleared away the rubbish which had been heaped around the temple. We have cleansed it within and without from the polluting marks of human innovation, and it now stands forth in all the glory and the beauty of its original proportions. 'There is not one stone of a new foundation laid by us; yea the old walls stand still, only the overcasting of those ancient stones with the untempered mortar of new inventions displeaseth us:' for 'what are these corruptions but unsound adjections to the ancient structure of religion.'[1] The only alterations we have made, pertain not to what was useful or necessary to the church, but only to what was injurious. Do we not still adhere to the only infallible rule of faith and practice? Do we not still receive and profess those creeds, beyond which there can be nothing fundamental or necessary? Do we not observe every ordinance and institute made binding on us by divine authority? Do we not still adhere to that form of government by bishops, elders, (or presbyters,) and deacons, which was ordained by apostolic wisdom? Have we not a confession and catechisms which are preëminently scriptural, beautiful, and instructive: which occupied the prayerful and learned labors of hundreds of the most pious and able men of all parties in England and Scotland, for the space of many years; which were adopted by a British parliament; which were independently examined, and unanimously embraced, by the Scottish church; which have been generally approved by the body of congregationalists; and which have constituted a bulwark of orthodoxy, before which the enemies of the truth have ever quailed?

Where was presbyterianism before the reformation? Abolish those popish ceremonies, those man-determined doctrines, those traditionary dogmas, the legends of erring and deluded men, those unauthorized orders and forms; remove those changes and innovations from the Romish and the Anglican church, and you will have the primitive form of Roman and Anglican christianity, which you will find to be presbyterianism. 'To be safe from Rome we must have doctrines older than Rome; and such we profess to have. And we refuse to have our inheritance taken away from us, because an

1) Bp. Hall's Old Rel. ch. vii.

unfaithful church has brought wild beasts into it, and left wreck and devastation all over its happy plains.' [1]

'As when a hillock of defiling earth,
Let slip from an o'erhanging eminence,
Into the bosom of a clear blue flood,
Comes falling, the pent current on each side
Labors for outlet, and overflowing rills
Are lost, in fen and reed untraceable.
But far above, gathering its own deep strength,
Between the rocks an undefiled stream
Forth issues, rolling clear its watery bank;
While the broad bed of the descending flood,
With dark discolorings and miry weeds,
Bears on its forward passage to the sea.
Thus when the infatuate council, named of Trent,
Clogged up the catholic course of the true faith,
Troubling the stream of pure antiquity,
And the wide channel in its bosom took
Crude novelties, scarce known as that of old;
Our church, though straitened sore 'tween craggy walls,
Kept her true course, unchanging, and the same;
Known by that ancient clearness, pure and free,
With which she sprung from 'neath the throne of God.'

But it is said we have reformed the church of Christ, which cannot admit of reformation, and that, therefore, we cannot trace our church beyond Luther's time. But this objection lies only against the reformed Tridentine church of Rome, since we pretend to be a reformation not of the church of Christ, but of the church of Rome, which may go astray, and has infallibly gone astray, in innumerable instances. There is no church called the protestant church. 'There are different branches of the church of Christ, protesting against the errors of the church of Rome, such as the Lutheran church, the presbyterian church, and the episcopal church. The universal church of Christ is one, holy, catholic, and apostolical; but the before-mentioned branches of this church do not pretend to be the whole church of Christ. Yet they are one with the universal church, as the disciples of Christ are one with Christ; they are holy, as being parts of that which is holy; they are catholic, as being parts of the church universal; and they are apostolical, because they are founded on the doctrines and discipline of the apostles.'

From the brief review now taken of the facts in the case, it very plainly appears, that among all the reformed churches, the Romish included, the presbyterian leads on the van as the

1) The English church had confessedly lost sight of her original principles. Woodgate's Bampton Lectures, p. 11.

2) Bishop Burgess's Tracts, p 195.

oldest of them all; the first-born of this family of the reformation; the glorious leader of the host. It is as plain, that among all the existing constitutions of all these churches, by which severally they are now bound, and according to which they regulate their practice, the standards of the presbyterian churches take precedence, in point of date, to those of the Romish or the Anglican church, and that, of them all, the Romish is the most novel. The faith, the order, the constitution — which go to make up the substance of presbyterianism, are therefore undeniably THE MOST ANCIENT. They are the first-fruits of that seed which had in every previous period been sown in the ungracious soil, and during most unpropitious seasons; which had ever and again burst forth in some vigorous shoot, only to be blasted by the keen edge of wintry and bitter persecution; but which, now, by the favoring providence of God, are brought forth to a rich and plentiful harvest.

§ 4. *The presbyterian church is the oldest in the United States, and in South Carolina, as compared with the Romish and episcopal churches.*

It will appear equally plain, that, among all the different organized churches in these United States, and in the state of South Carolina, the presbyterian is the most ancient. Wherever there are presbyterians enough to constitute a presbytery, there the church is fully organized and established, since we regard synods and assemblies not as *essential* to the system, but only as its development. They form the extension of the presbytery, so as to secure for the whole body all the benefits of unity, order, efficiency, and justice. On the other hand, a popish or prelatic organized body cannot exist until there is an episcopal order to constitute the centre of its unity, the bond of attraction, and the source of legitimate authority and power. So says archbishop Secker, in his letter to Mr. Walpole, on this very subject of the American episcopate, where he urges this, among other reasons, on its behalf. 'It belongs to the very nature of episcopal churches, to have bishops, at proper distances, presiding over them.'[1] The establishment of bishops and their jurisdiction is, therefore, as essential to the constitution of episcopal churches, as is that of the presbytery to presbyterian churches.

1) Letter concerning Bishops in Amer. p. 3. See Crit. Com. on, by Rev. Mr. Blackburne, p. 9, and Secker's Wks.

Dr. Chandler, also, in his Appeal on behalf of the Church of England in America, urges as a reason, why bishops should be allowed,[1] that 'if, according to the doctrine and belief of the Church of England, none have a right to govern the church but bishops, nor to ordain, nor to confirm; then the American church, while without bishops, must be without government, without ordination and confirmation.' 'But it must be also granted, that, for such a number of presbyters to be left without a bishop at their head, to superintend and govern them, is a thing equally unknown to the constitution of any episcopal church upon earth.' When, then, we ask, were the Romanists first supplied, by the pope, with the essential element of a Romish church — a valid episcopate? The first Romish bishop consecrated in America was Carroll, of Baltimore, in 1790. But he was ordained by only one bishop, which is invalid, according to canonical law; so that all the orders flowing from him are canonically invalid, and the Romish church in this country self-excommunicated from the true church.[2] But passing all this, the earliest date which can be assigned to the Romish church, as an organized body in this country, is 1790.

If we again inquire, at what period the present constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country was established, we find that it was in the year 1789, up to which time, as Dr. Hawks informs us, 'there was no bond holding the churches on this continent together, but the bond of a common faith.'[3] Up to the period of August, 1789, the protestant episcopal church was not organized in the United States, but existed only as so many independent churches.[4] In sending delegates to the general meeting in 1785, the clergy of South Carolina gave unequivocal proof of their independence, by annexing an understanding, that NO BISHOP was to be settled in that state.[5] From the time of the dissolution of all connection with the English church, by the revolution, the episcopal church in this country was 'without even a regular government,'[6] and had 'as yet no resource within itself, for a succession of ministers.'[7] Thus left to themselves, 'the epis-

1) Pp. 27, 28.

2) See New York Rev. Jan. 1842, p. 126.

3) See also bishop White's Memoirs of Prot. Episc. Ch.

4) Thus every minister in Virginia was required by their 10th Canon, to conform to the doctrine, &c., of the Prot. Episc. Church of Virginia. Convention of 1785.

5) Dr. Hawk's and Dalcho's Hist. p. 469. The first bishop in South Carolina was bishop Smith, consecrated in 1795; ibid, p. 428.

6) Journals of Convent. of Virg. in Hawk's Eccl. Hist. App. p. 7.

7) Ibid, and p. 28.

copal clergy began to look about how to get this fundamental defect, (their destitution of bishops,) removed, and their orphan church duly organized.'[1] 'She had no bishops — no visible form of church government,'[2] and 'no centre of unity remained.'[3] 'This was the melancholy condition of the church,' says the British Critic, 'in 1783, and from that date to the close of the century, it was fully employed in organizing itself upon the apostolical model. It obtained bishops from Scotland and England, in 1787, and in the course of the thirteen years which followed.'[4]

It thus appears, that while, through the Rev. Professor Whittingham, now bishop of Maryland, the Episcopal Church in this country can speak of 'other denominations, with one exception, (that is, the Romish,) as 'all of mushroom growth, not even coeval with the discovery of our continent, but as yesterday, children of change . . . . novelty is their origin and bane'[5] — that this very church, in its organized form, dates back no further than the year 1789!! and received this boasted succession, by which she first became a living church, in the year 1787!!!

And yet, before the year 1640, there had come to this country, from Scotland and Ireland, according to Mather, four thousand presbyterians.[6] In 1684, a small colony of persecuted Scotch, under Lord Cardross, settled in South Carolina.[7] Within three years before 1773, sixteen hundred emigrants from the north of Ireland settled in Carolina: and scarcely a ship sailed from any Irish port for Charleston, that was not crowded, and that almost entirely by presbyterians.[8] To the Scotch, also, says Dr. Ramsay, this state is indebted for a great proportion of its physicians, clergymen, lawyers, and schoolmasters. The English puritans were, many of them, presbyterians. The Dutch were also presbyterians. A portion of the German emigrants were of the same denomination. All the French protestants were as staunch Calvinists and presbyterians, as were the Scotch and the Irish,[9] their constitution

1) Adams's Relig. World, vol. ii. p. 447, from Skinner, Eccl. Hist.

2) Brit Crit. Oct.1839, pp. 282,286.

3) Caswall's Am. Ch. in ibid, p. 286.

4) Brit.Crit. Oct. 1839, p. 286. Dr. Wilson, in his Memoirs of Bishop White, speaks also of 'the proceedings for reviving and organizing anew our church, formerly known by the name of the Church of England in America.' P. 95.

5) See his sermon, 'Count the Cost,' published in 1836, in which he truly speaks of 'the conspicuousness thus given to his church by her own pretensions!!!' P. 27.

6) See Hodge's Constit. Hist. of the Presb. Ch. vol. i. ch. i.

7) Ibid, p. 67.

8) Ibid.

9) Hodge, ibid, p. 68.

having been framed by the immortal Calvin. The American presbyterian church, therefore, is composed of Puritans, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, German, and French emigrants, who have all become built up into one spiritual temple in the Lord. The number of presbyterian emigrants, who came to this country by the middle of the last century, was between one and two hundred thousand. Those from Ireland alone were not less than fifty thousand.[1] And, as their blood has now flowed into one common stream, so have they been molten down and moulded into one christian mass. In the year 1704, a presbytery consisting of seven ministers was constituted, called the presbytery of Philadelphia. This had so increased as to be divided, in 1716, into four presbyteries, and thus to constitute the synod of Philadelphia; and in 1788, so as to constitute four synods, which organized the general assembly in 1789.

From the very commencement of the settlement of South Carolina, there were a sufficient number of puritans in it to keep up a constant warfare, as Dr. Ramsay says, with the high-churchmen.[2] In 1685, great numbers of French protestants, that is, presbyterians, sought an asylum here.[3] The congregationalists and presbyterians had a church in Charleston as early as 1690. The presbyterians, says Ramsay, were among the first settlers, and were always numerous.[4] Of the numerous emigrants, in the last fifty years of the eighteenth century, a great majority were presbyterians. They were fully organized into a presbytery very early in the eighteenth century.[5]

While, therefore, on our principles, there were fully organized presbyterian churches in this country, and in this state, from the earliest period; on the principles of prelacy there was not an organized episcopal church in this country, having any visible form or centre of unity, or principle of vitality, until the year 1789. The patent for the colony of South Carolina was granted in 1663. In the year 1701, Dr. Humphrey states, that with a white population of seven thousand persons, 'natives of these kingdoms, (that is, Britain,) there was, until the year 1701, no minister of the church of England resident in this colony.'[6] In 1710, the episcopalians formed less than half the population, counting several French congregations.[7] On the other hand, as we have seen, there was a regularly organ-

1) Hodge, ibid, p. 70.
2) Hist. of S. C. vol. ii. p. 45.
3) Ibid, p. 28.
4) Ibid, p. 24.
5) Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 26.
6) Hist. of Soc. for Prop. Rel. p. 25.
7) Hodge's Hist. of Presb. Ch. part ii. 457.

ized church, formed by the union of presbyterians and independents in Charleston, as early as the year 1690.[1] Nay, it appears, that the present episcopal organization in this state can date no further back than the year 1804. For, in his sermon upon the late Dr. Bowen, the present bishop says:[2] '*in* 1804, *the diocese was reduced*, we may say, *to its original elements*. The bishop was gone to his rest, no convention had been held for five years, and there was no standing committee existing or acting. The Rev. Mr. Bowen, the youngest minister in it, was one of the principal leaders in the measures for its reorganization. A convention of the churches was held in February, 1804; rules for its governance, chiefly prepared by him, were adopted, and he was elected secretary of the convention, and of the standing committee.'

In what sense, then, can episcopalians or Romanists, claim to be 'the legitimate branch of the holy catholic church, in these United States,'[3] since, on their own principles, priority of establishment constitutes the claim to apostolic jurisdiction, in any kingdom. Verily they have both pronounced upon themselves a sentence of illegitimacy. They are, as judged by their own harsh canons, intruders, usurpers, uncatholic, uncanonical, and dissenters from the only true, primitive, and apostolic church in these lands, which, on their own principles, is no other than the presbyterian.[4]

## § 5. *Conclusion.*

We have now concluded what the limits of this work will permit us to say in vindication of the faith and order of our fathers. Our church has been, in ten thousand ways, challenged to the contest, by the bold and reckless assertions of prelatists and papists. We have long borne in patience and in silence. While the armies of the Philistines have been holding us up as cowards to the contumely of all men, such has been our love of peace and charity, and our desire to be engaged in seeking the immediate benefit of the souls of men, that in this country, during the last century, but three champions have found leisure to go forth and meet these boasting Goliahs. The Rev. Dr. Miller, the Rev. Dr. Mason, and the Rev.

1) Ramsay, Hist. S. C. vol. ii. p. 25.

2) P. 15, see also p. 42.

3) Origin of the Prayer Book, pp. 106, 113, by Mr. Odenheimer of Phil.

4) In this discussion we again remind the reader, we use the term presbyterian in its large comprehension, and therefore purposely avoid any invidious comparisons, between denominations who regard one another as brethren in the Lord.

Dr. Rice, have ventured forth, like other Davids, and, with the sling and stones gathered from the brook of sacred writ, have achieved a noble conquest over all the might and power of their heavy-armed antagonists. Others, indeed, have rendered able service in a more limited measure.[1] These, however, have done so with manifest reluctance, and have hastened back to more congenial occupations. Our enemies, nevertheless though thrice signally defeated, with new and multiplied reinforcements, still give battle. There is no possible opportunity, artifice, or device passed by, that may promote their interests, or injure our cause. Their arms are opened to every deserter who has been driven from our camp by his own instability, failure, disappointed ambition, wounded pride, or vanity and chagrin, who is held up to the world as a splendid trophy of the power of their principles; and thus do they glory in what ought to be their shame, and to fill them with confusion of face. Every writer among them is a defamer of presbytery, and asserts his bravery by the loudness of his challenge, and the hardihood with which he asseverates what has been again and again disproved. Their press, in every city and state throughout our extended union, is filled with the praises of prelacy and popery, and the most distorted pictures of presbyterianism. Even in our most refined communities, and before the most intelligent audiences, as in Charleston, the veriest tyros in divinity, who know no more about the controversy than they have learned in the school of prejudice, are heard uttering the thunders of damnation, while they pour forth the vials of wrath upon us aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise.

In these circumstances, it is time for us to awake. Our silence has been misinterpreted, our patience abused, and our charity perverted, to the injury of the truth, and to the support of bigotry and error. We, then, may be pardoned, who, emboldened by diligent preparation and the implored assistance of Him whose cause we plead, have come forth to lend our feeble help to the Lord against the mighty. We have not, therefore, been content to stand in the breach. We have met the enemy on his own chosen grounds, and engaged him with his own weapons. Our warfare is not merely defensive, but aggressive. We have reclaimed territory as ours by inalienable rights, which our opponents have long possessed by right only of usurpation. We have endeavored to make good

1) Such as Mr. Barnes, and recently the Rev. Mr. Duffield, and Mr. Eddy.

our title to an inheritance for which prelatists plead custom, and we a divine charter; to plant the standard of apostolic order, where the gaudy banner of patristical formality had long waved; and again to garrison those outposts from which our enemies have been too long permitted to harass us.

The prelatic claims we have shown to be utterly untenable, either by Scripture or truly primitive antiquity. There is against the system a negative testimony which is in itself overwhelming.

By this doctrine it is taught, that Christ and his apostles instituted three orders in the ministry; that to the first of these they delegated all the authority imparted to the church, and the exclusive right of ordaining any to the gospel ministry; that this arrangement was made an essential element in the being and continuance of the church; and that, as such, it was enjoined upon all their followers, and instituted in every church. Now this being so, it is, as has been shown, morally certain that they would have explicitly announced the doctrine, and that the fact of its apostolic institution in all the churches would have been made certain. The very contrary, however, is the truth in the case. This system has not been explicitly taught in the New Testament, or in the early fathers, even in those places where it must have been inevitably introduced. No triple commission is to be found; no exclusive grant to the prelatic order; no affirmation of the essentiality of this system to the existence and order of the church. This, as has been fully shown, is largely admitted. And it is further granted that these three orders of ministers were not established in *some* of the apostolic churches, while we confidently challenge proof for their existence any where, during at least three centuries. To say, then, that from the apostles' time these orders have existed, and have been regarded as they are by prelatists now, is most preposterous and absurd.

We have, however, shown that there is positive proof in the scriptures and the fathers *against* this theory, and in confirmation of all the essential principles of presbytery. Every power claimed by prelatists as peculiarly their own by divine gift, we have proved to belong, by divine right, to all the ministers of the gospel, who are in general denominated presbyters. Every church spoken of in the New Testament, and by the apostolic, primitive, and early fathers, was parochial, and not diocesan, that is, it was presbyterian; and the primitive government of the church was the episcopacy of presbytery, and not of prelacy.

The evidence in favor of this original constitution of the

church of Christ, we have traced through every age of the church. The most eminent fathers have turned king's evidence, and given solemn testimony against the usurpations of prelacy. Those who, in every period of the church, stood forth in defence of the faith once delivered to the saints, contended also, and that earnestly, for presbyterial polity, against the despotism of the hierarchy. The whole body of the schoolmen taught the scripturalness of the fundamental principles of presbyterianism. The glorious company of the reformers — Waldensian, Bohemian, German, French, Scottish, and English — agreed in the maintenance of these same doctrines. They were professed by the ancient Culdees of Ireland and Scotland, in the west; by the Vallenses, in the south; and by the Syrians and Alexandrians, in the East. Prelacy is therefore a novelty, an innovation; and while sustained by the practice of a corrupted and degenerate church, through many ages, has been condemned by the wisest and the best men, in all ages, and in all parts of the church.

# NOTE A.

## BOOK I. CHAPTER VI. P. 156.

### ON RULING ELDERS.

It would appear to be unquestionable, that in the fathers, the term presbyter was always exclusively applied to ordained spiritual advisers, who were distinguished from the laity. Hence, in latin, the term presbyter was rendered by sacerdos, pastor, and the like. The late Dr. Wilson, in his learned work on the government of the churches, has examined all the fathers of the first six centuries, and is very confident, that they never, in any case, refer to an order of men similar to our ruling elders, under the term *presbyters*. (Prim. Govt. of the Ch. Phil. 1833, p. 372.) The same conclusion was arrived at, by the celebrated Blondel, (De Jure Pleb.; in Reg. Eccl; in Jameson's Cyprianus Isotinus, p. 541,) by Baxter, (Baxter on Episc., and Orme's Life of, pp. 74, 77,) by professor Jameson, (Cyprianus Isot. pp. 517, 540, 544, 546,) by the authors of Smectymnuus, (Lond. 1641, pp. 72–74,) by many of the French presbyterian churches, (Quick's Synodicon, vol. i. p. 229, and vol. ii. p. 472, in Dr. Wilson, ibid, p. 247,) by Vitringa, (De Synag. Vet. pp. 479, 482, 484,) by Boyse, (Anct. Episc. p. 208,) by many presbyterians, (Jameson's Cyp. Isot. pp. 551, 552, 555,) by some even of the members of the Westminster Assembly, (Lightfoot's Works, vol. xiii., and Dr. Alexander's Hist. of the Assembly, pp. 103, 104, 217, 259,) by the church of Geneva, (Laws of Geneva, Lond. 1643, where they are called commissioners of the seniory, and deputies, and were not ordained; see pp. 1, 3, 5, &c.,) by Calvin himself, in his earlier years, (Dr. Wilson, ibid, p. 247,) and by the Remonstrants of Holland, (Confession of the Remonstr. p. 225, Lond. 1676.) The Second Book of Discipline provided, that three, four, or more particular kirks, might have one eldership common to them all, according to the practice of the primitive church, (ch. vii. see Life of Melville, vol. i. p. 168.) This, also, was the opinion of the learned Mosheim, who sustains it at some length, (see Comment. on the Affairs of Christ. Bef. Constantine, vol. i. pp. 215–218, Lond. 1813,) and thinks there is clear proof, that while some presbyters governed and instructed the church at home, and were thus the presiding or governing presbyters, (προϊστωτες πρεσβυτεροι,) others occupied themselves in converting the Jews and heathen from their errors, and in bringing them into the fold of Christ. These, therefore, *labored in word and doctrine*, (κοπιωντα.) (See his explanation of this word, and its usus loquendi, as in 1 Cor. 4: 12, and 1 Cor. 15: 10; Rom. 16: 12; and also Voetius, Polit. Eccles. tom. iii. p. 441.) The reformed churches of Hungary and Transylvania, while they regarded ruling elders as allowable, did not introduce them into their own polity, (Voetius's Polit. Eccl. tom. iii. p. 459.) Mr. Baxter states, that his opinion was, that of 'the greater part, if not three for one of the English ministers;' that it was the published opinion of Mr. Vines, one of the Westminster divines; and that in the county in which he then officiated, no such officers were instituted, (Five Disputations on Ch. Govt. Lond. 1659, pref. p. 4.) Grotius maintains, 'that the perpetual offices in the church are two, that of presbyters and deacons. Those I call presbyters, with all the ancient church, who feed the church with the preaching of the gospel, the sacraments, and the keys,' (De Imperio. c. 10, p. 267; in ibid, p. 39.) Gieseler rejects the distinction between teaching and ruling elders as an invention of Calvin, (Text Book of Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 58. Neander, also, although a very

strong advocate of the original presbyterianism of the church, yet is decidedly of opinion, that there was no such distinct class of officers as ruling elders, in our sense of the office. He traces their existence only to the North African churches, in the fourth century, in which there were certain leaders of the church, called 'seniores plebis,' but not presbyters or elders; who were expressly distinguished from the clerical body; and who, as the representatives of the congregation, constituted a middle class between the clergy and the laity, for whose interests they consulted, (Hist. of the Chr. Rel. and Ch. vol. i. p. 205. See also the Note, where he quotes several authorities similar to those given above, and to the same effect.) These he regards, as the remains of a similar arrangement in the previous ages, in perfect accordance with the views we have already advanced.

For, that there were officers in the primitive church, and probably in the apostolic, *similar* to our elders, we believe. But they were called by the ancients seniors, and are, probably, 'the helps or governments' spoken of by the apostles, and 'the brethren' who sat in their councils and presbyteries, as representatives of the people, who could not, as in Jerusalem, have all assembled together. These officers are frequently spoken of by the fathers, who carefully distinguish them from presbyters. The word *senior* is never applied by them to ministers, but only to these laymen. Thus in Optatus and Augustine, we read of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and seniors, *et seniores*, or *seniores plebis*, seniors of the people, (Opt. de Schism. lib. i. c. 17; Aug. Ep. 137; and Contr. Crese. Gramm. lib. iii. c. 56, &c.) Similar quotations might be produced from Origen, and many others, (see given in Smectymnuus, pp. 72–74, and in Dr Wilson, as above,) 'by all which,' say the authors of Smectymnuus, who were members of the Westminster Assembly, 'it is apparent, 1, that in the ancient church there were some called seniors; 2, that these seniors were not clergymen; 3, that they had a stake in governing the church and managing the affairs thereof; and, 4, that seniors were distinguished from the rest of the people.'

The whole burden of proof, therefore, rests on those who generalize the term presbyter so as to include *Ruling Elders*. The presumption is entirely against them. And solid proof they ought assuredly to bring forward, before confounding the scripture statements and terms, so as to make them mean nothing in particular, and to have no special or official application — and thus involving us in the absurdity, that all ruling elders are bishops and teachers, and are, as they must therefore necessarily be, entitled to preach, to administer sacraments, and to ordain.

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# INDEX IV.

## WORKS ON PRESBYTERIANISM.

We will here add a list of works on Presbyterianism, as a contribution to its literature — a proof of its strength — and a guide to its investigation. The list, however, will only contain distinct works on the subject, and not the numerous works from which valuable information may be drawn in reference to every separate branch of the subject. These will be found fully referred to in the work itself.

N. B. Those marked with an * are in the author's possession.

§ 1. *Works on Presbyterianism, by Continental Writers.*

* Calvin's Institutes of Religion. — Book iv.

Beza de diversis ministrorum gradibus contra Saraviam. Geneva, 1594.

Petr. Viretus de verbo Dei, Sacramentorum, et ecclesiæ ministerio. Geneva, 1553, folio.

Anton. Sadeelus de legitima vocatione pastorum eccl. reformatæ. 1583.

Dan. Tossanus de legitima pastorum evangelicorum vocatione, officio et præsidio. Heidelb. 1590.

* Turretine in his Institut. Theologicæ, tom. iii. de distinctione Episcopi et Presbyteri.

* Vitringa de Synagoga Vetere, in which he shows that the government of the synagogue was transferred to the christian church.

* H. Witsius de Vita Timothei and Exercitationes Deylingii Observationes Miscellaneæ, and de Synedriis Hebræorum.

Ursinus Corpus Doctrinæ Christianæ, page 582.

Blondeli Apologia pro sent. Hieronymi de episcopis et presbyteris.

* Blondel de la Sincerite et verite des Eglises reformees de France, &c. A Sedan, 1619.

* Blondel's Actes Authentiques des Eglises Reformees, A. Amsterdam, 1655, 4to.

Blondel de Jure Plebis in Regimine Ecclesiastica.

Gersom Bucer Dissert. de Gabern. Ecclesiæ.

Salmasius's Apparatus ad Primat.

* Voetius's Politicæ Ecclesiasticæ, tom. iii. at large.

Voetius de Desperata Causa Papatus.

Irenæi Philadelphii (i. e. Ludovici Molinæi) ad Renatum Vendæum in qua aperitur mysterium iniquitatis novissime in Anglia redivivum et excutitur liber Josephi Halli quo asseritur Episcopatum esse juris divini. Amsterdam, 1641, in the Old South Lib. Also Ludovici Molinæi Apologia, for the same Londini, 1641, in do.

* A Defence of the Reformation, &c. by Monsieur Claude, Minister of the Reformed Church at Charenton, 2 volumes, 8vo., London, 1815.

Paget's (Minister at Amsterdam) Defence of Church Government.

Paget's Power of Classes and Synods. This I have had and examined.

Boileau de Antiquo Jure Presbyterorum, in 2 volumes, 12mo.

La Discipline des Eglises Reformees de France par J. D'Huisseau, Ministre a Saumur. A. Geneva, 1667.

Wallonis's Messalini de Episcopis et Presbyteris Dissert.

Buxtorfi Synagoga Judaica. Basil, 1641.

* Daillé's (Minister of the Reformed Church in Paris) Treatise on the

Right Use of the Fathers in the Decision of Controversies existing at this day in Religion, recently reprinted in English. London, 1841.

* Mosheim's Church History.

* Mosheim's Commentaries on the Affairs of Christians before the time of Constantine the Great. Translated by Vidal, 3 volumes, 8vo. London, 1813.

* Neander's History of the Christian Religion and Church, during the three first centuries. Translated by Rose, in 2 volumes, 8vo. London.

* Neander's History of the Planting and Training of the Christ. Church by the Apostles. Translated by J. E. Ryland. Edinburgh, 1842, in 2 volumes, 12mo.

* DeMoor's Commentarius Perpetuus in Johannis Marckii Compendium Theol. Christ. 4to. tom. vi. 1771.

* Mastrich's Theoretico-Practica Theologia. 1799, 4to. tom. ii.

§ 2. *Works on Presbyterianism, by British Authors.**

Cartwright's Replyes to an Answere made of M. Doctor Whitgifte. London, 1575 and 1577. In Mass. Hist. Soc. Libr.

* Altare Damascenum seu Ecclesiæ Anglicana Politia, by David Calderwood. My copy is a very large 4to. printed at Lugduni Batavorum, 1708, having appended Calderwood's Epistolæ Ecclesiæ cum ejusdem vindiciis, written against Archbishop Spotswood under the name of Hieronymus Philadelphus.

An Appeal to the Parliament, or Zion's Plea against the Prelacie, by Alexander Leighton, father of the archbishop. Printed in 1627, 4to. 344. This is the work for which he suffered so dreadfully, and is to be found in Harvard College Library.

* A Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies in God's Worship, by Ames. London, 1632, 4to.

An Assertion for True and Christian Church Policie, &c. by William Stoughton. London, 1604. Old South Library, Boston.

* Aaron's Rod Blossoming, or the Divine Ordinance of Church Government Vindicated, &c. 1646, by Geo. Gillespie, and dedicated to the Westminster Assembly, of which he was a member as a commissioner from Scotland. Many other publications, bearing more or less on Presbyterian Church Government, proceeded from his pen; among others, 'An Assertion of the Discipline and Government of the Church of Scotland,' 1641, in small quarto; also, which I have, 'Male Audis,' in reply to Mr. Coleman. London, 1646, 4to.

* The 'Due Right of Presbyteries,' a thick 4to. 1644, by Samuel Rutherford, author of the celebrated Letters which bear his name, and Professor of Divinity at St. Andrews — a man of eminent scholarship and acuteness as his attainments in Rabbinical learning, appearances in the Westminster Assembly, his works, and the estimation in which he was held by foreign contemporaries, all show.

* A Peaceable Plea for Paul's Presbytery. London, 1642, 4to. by the same author.

* 'A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time, wherein the tenets of the principal sects, especially of the Independents, are drawn together, &c., and examined by the touchstone of the Holy Scriptures,' by Robert Baillie, 1645. Baille, after holding more than one Professorship, was Principal of Glasgow College. This work, when assailed, he vindicated. Besides this, he published much in defence of the Church of Scotland against the Claims of Episcopacy, particularly an 'Answer to Bishops Maxwell and Bramhall.' His Letters and Journals are also very valuable as a history of the Westminster Assembly, 2 volumes, 8vo. 1775. Baillie, like his two preceding brethren, was a member of the Westminster Assembly.

The Angel of the Church of Ephesus, no Bishop, &c., by Constant Jessup, a member of the Westminster Assembly. London, 1644. In the Harvard College Library.

* 'A Brief Refutation of the Errors of Toleration, Erastianism, Independency, and Separation,' by James

* To present a complete catalogue of British works on this subject would be impossible, since it is said that between 1640 and 1660, no less than 30,000 pamphlets appeared on Church Government alone.

Fergusson, of Kilwinning, written in 1652, but published in 1692.

James Wood, Professor of Theology at St. Andrews, published 'An Examination and Refutation of Lockyer's Lecture on the Visible Church, in defence of Presbytery, and against Independency,' in 1654.

* 'Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, or Divine Right of Church Government Asserted and Evidenced by the Holy Scriptures,' &c. &c., by sundry ministers of Christ within the city of London, 1654, 3d ed. A quarto, and a work of admirable and overpowering argument.

* Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici, or the Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry, by the Provincial Assembly of London. 1654, 4to. This is entitled to all the praise due to the preceding.

* A model of Church Government, by John Drury, one of the Assembly of Divines. London, 1647, 4to.

* A Vindication of the Judgment of the Reformed Churches concerning Ordination, and laying on of hands. London, 1647, by Lazarus Seaman, a member of the Assembly of Divines.

* Separation Examined, &c. by G. Firmin, Minister of the Gospel in Shalford, in Essex. London, 1652, 4to.

* A Treatise on Schisms, Parochial Congregations, and Imposition of Hands, by the same author. London, 1658.

* A short Treatise describing the true Church of Christ, by Mr. Richard Byfield, a member of the Assembly of Divines. London, 1653, 4to.

* Vindiciæ Vindiciarum, &c. London, 1651, by D. C.

* Allsop's Melius Inquirendum. London, 1679, 3d edition.

* Milton's Reformation in England, touching Church Discipline; of Prelatical Episcopacy; the Reason of Church Government; Animadversions on the Remonstrants' Defence against Smectymnuus, and an Apology for Smectymnuus; all worthy of his fame.

* Smectymnuus, or an Humble Remonstrance. London, 1641, in which the original of Liturgy and Episcopacy is discussed, the parity of bishops and presbyters in Scripture demonstrated, the antiquity of ruling elders in the church vindicated, &c. &c., by five learned and orthodox Divines. This was an answer to Bishop Hall's 'Defence of the Church of England.' The authors were, Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and Wm. Spurston, whose initials make up the title.

* The Utter Routing of the Whole Army of all the Independents and Sectaries, with the total overthrow of their Hierarchy, &c. &c., by John Bastwick, Captain in the Presbyterian Army, &c. London, 1646, 4to. pp. 662. The title-page of this book is extremely curious. The contents are able.

* The Anatomy of the Service-Book, by Dwalphintramis, 4to. pp. 102. Printed in the year, &c. This is a very rare and curious pamphlet, published by a number of Ministers in Edinburgh, when Laud's Service-Book was forced upon them.

* CXI. Propositions concerning the Ministry and Government of the Church, printed by order of the General Assembly, in Edinburgh, 1647.

* The Diocesan's Tryall, by Mr. M. Paul Baynes. London, 1621. Small 4to. A work of close and powerful reasoning in syllogisms.

* Bostwick's Flagellum Pontificis et Episcoporum Latialum.

Parker de Politica Ecclesiastica, 1621.

* Lord Brooke's Discourse, opening the nature of that Episcopacy which is exercised in England. London, 1642, 4to.

Hickman's Answer to Durell.

Crofton's Serious Review of Presbyters' reordination by Bishops. London, 1660. 4to.

Hickman's Letter to a Friend, showing the value of Presbyterian ordination. London, 1661.

A Peaceable Enquiry into that Novel Controversie about Re-Ordination; written by that learned and Reverend Mr. J. Humphrey. London, 1661. Old South Library.

Prynne's Unbishoping of Timothy, and that the power of Ordination, &c. belongs, jure divino, to Presbyters as well as Bishops. London, 1636.

* Prynne also published 'A Catalogue of such Testimonies in all ages as plainly evidence Bishops and Pres-

byters to be both one, equal and the same in jurisdiction, office, dignity, order, and degree,' &c. London, 1641, 4to.

* Prynne also published 'The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie both to Regal Monarchie and Civil Unity,' &c. London, 1641. 2 volumes, 4to.

* I have also a copy of Prynne's earlier work, 'The Church of England's Antithesis to New Arminianisme,' &c. London, 1629. 4to. pp. 140.*

* Baxter's Five Disputations of Ch. Government and Worship. London, 1659. 4to. p. 492.

* Baxter's True and Only Way of Concord of all the Christian Churches, &c. London, 1680.

* Baxter's Treatise of Episcopacy, confuting by Scripture, Reason, and the Church's testimony that sort of Diocesan Churches, Prelacy, and Government, which casteth out the primitive Church-species, Episcopacy, Ministry, and Discipline, &c. London, 1681. Small folio. This is an unanswered and unanswerable work.

* Baxter's 'English Nonconformity truly stated and argued.' London, 1689.

* Irenicum, by Bishop Stillingfleet. London, 1662. This work the author never repudiated, nor can the whole hierachy ever answer it.

* A Vindication of the Presbyterial Government and Ministry, by the Ministers and Elders met in Provincial Assembly, November, 1649. Small quarto. London, 1650.

The Good Old Way Defended, &c., wherein the Divine Right of the Government of the Church by Presbyters acting in parity, is asserted, &c., by Gilbert Rule, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, 1697. He was the author of various pamphlets in defence of Presbytery against Episcopacy, after the Restoration.

* Nazianzeni Querela et Votum Justum; the Fundamentals of the Hierachy Examined and Disproved, by William Jameson, Lecturer of History in the University of Glasgow. 1697.

* Cyprianus Isotimus, or J. S.'s (John Sage, a Scottish Episcopal Bishop,) Vindication of his Principles of the Cyprianic Age Confuted, &c., by the same author. 1705.

The Sum of the Episcopal Controversy, as it is Pleaded from the Holy Scriptures, &c. &c., by the same. 1713. 2d ed.

Jameson must have been a remarkable man. His works are full of learning, and yet he was blind. This is beautifully referred to by him, in the conclusion of his 'Nazienzeni.' Apologizing for the defects of his book, he says, 'Besides the other disadvantages which environ me, according to the good pleasure of Him who doeth all things well, I have from the very womb labored under the want of that noble sense of seeing, and so am obliged to read with the eyes, and write with the hand of others. Yet, though I be deprived of the sweet light and pleasure of beholding the sun, it little moves me, if so be that I may see the infinitely more precious light of the most glorious and dear Sun of Righteousness, and be illuminated and enlivened with that all-healing virtue which is in his wings.'

The Hierarchal Bishops' Claim to a Divine Right, tried at the Scripture Bar, (in answer to three authors, two of them Bishops,) the whole issuing in a clear discerning of the solid grounds of Presbyterian Government, in opposition to Prelacy, by Principal Forrester, of St. Andrews. Quarto, 1669.

* A Review and Consideration of two Pamphlets, &c., in confutation of Bishop Sage on the Cyprianic Age. Edinburgh, 1706. 4to. pp. 409. The same author, at an earlier day, 1684, anonymously published, 'Rectina Instruendum, containing a confutation of Episcopacy, and vindication of the Truth, owned by the true Protestant and Presbyterian Church of Scotland.' Currie, in his 'Vindication,' states that Forrester was the author.

The Divine Institution of Bishops having Churches consisting of many Congregations, examined by Scripture. by Alex. Lauder, Minister of Mordington, 1711. The same author published 'The Jurisdiction and

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* I have also his 'Histrio-Mastix. The Player's Scourge, or Actor's Tragedie,' &c. London, 1633. 4to. pp. 1006.

Power of the Ancient Bishops Considered,' in answer to Chillingworth, 1707.

*Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship, and Spirit of the Presbyterians,' by Anderson, Minister of Dumbarton, and afterwards first Minister of the Ramshorn Ch., Glasgow, 1704.

* Causa Episcopatus Hierarchici Lucifuga, or a confutation of Sage's Vindication of the Principles of the Cyprianic Age. This is a very able and learned work. Edinburgh, 1706. 4to. page 274.

* A Hind Let Loose, or a Historical Representation of the Testimonies of the Church of Scotland in all of its periods, &c. &c., by Alexander Shields, Minister in St. Andrews. Glasgow, 1797. pp. 835.

* The Remains of the reverend and learned Mr. John Corbet, including his Treatise on the Church. London, 1764. 4to.

* Lord King's Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church. London, 1691.

*A Defence of Moderate Non-Conformity, by Edmund Calamy, in 3 volumes, 8vo. London, 1703, &c.

* A Plea for Scripture Ordination, or Ten Arguments from Scripture and Antiquity proving Ordination by Presbyters without Bishops to be valid, by James Owen, Minister of the Gospel. London, 1707. This is a masterly work.

* The Common Prayer Book not Divine Service, by Vavasor Powell. London, 1661. 4to.

* A Vindication of the Dissenters, in Answer to Dr. William Nichols's Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, by James Peirce. London, 1717. This is a very celebrated work, by one of the best reasoners, and is still a treasury from which many draw their resources. It was published also in Latin.

* Tracts by the same author, including 'Presbyterian Ordination Proved Regular.' London, 1716, and 'A Defence of the Dissenting Ministry and Presbyterian Ordination.' London, 1717, 8vo. pp. 123.

* The History of Non-Conformity as it was argued and stated by Commissioners on both sides in 1616, &c. London, 1704.

* A Vindication of the Principles and Character of the Presbyterians of Ireland, by William Campbell, D. D., Minister of Armagh. London, 1787. 3d edition.

* Dunlap's Collection of Confessions of Faith, Catechisms, &c. of public authority in the Church of Scotland, 2 volumes, 12mo. thick. Edinburgh, 1719, &c., with a large and valuable Preface on the ends and uses of Creeds.

*Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those eminent Divines who convened in the famous Assembly of Westminster, by James Reid, 2 volumes, 8vo. Paisley, 1811.

* A Dissent from the Church of England fully Justified, by Micaiah Towgood. London, 1811. 12th ed.

* The Case of the Accommodation lately proposed by the Bishop of Dumblane to the Non-Conforming Ministers, examined, wherein the ancient episcopus præses is considered, &c.

*The Original Constitution of the Christian Church, wherein the Extremes on either hand are stated and examined; to which is added, an Appendix containing the Rise of the Jure Divino Prelatists, and an answer to their Arguments by Episcopal Divines, by T. A. (Thomas Ayton,) Minister of the Gospel at Alyth, 1730.

* A Clear Account of the Ancient Episcopacy, proving it to have been parochial, and therefore inconsistent with the present Model of Diocesan Episcopacy, wherein the several Pretensions of the Divine Right of the latter are fully examined, by Joseph Boyse, of Dublin.

* The works of the excellent Willison, of Dundee, may here be referred to. His views on Episcopacy are contained in his Letter from 'A Parochial Bishop to a Prelatical Gentleman;' his views on Independency in his controversy with John Glas.

A Humble Attempt to exhibit a Scriptural View of the Constitution, Order, Discipline, and Fellowship of the Gospel Church, by Archibald Hall. London, 1795.

A Short Vindication of Presbyterial Church Government, containing a

Summary View of the Evidence in support of it from the Scripture, together with an Examination of the Principal Arguments of the Independents against it, by George Whytock, of the Associate Congregation, Dalkeith, 1799.

Letters on the Constitution, Government, and Discipline of the Christian Church, by John Brown, of Haddington. 1799.

* A Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government, as professed in the Standards of the Church of Scotland, in reply to the Animadversions of Modern and Ancient Independents, by Rev. John Brown, of Gartmore, (afterwards of Langton.) 1805: and again, Edinburgh, 1812. 2d ed.

* Presbyterian Letters, addressed to Bishop Skinner, of Aberdeen, on his Vindication of Primitive Truths and Order, &c. by Dr. Mitchell, of Kennay. 1809.

* To the list might be added a work of the great Dr. Owen, entitled 'An Enquiry into the Original Nature, Institution, Power, Order, and Communion of Evangelical Churches, with an Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet.' Quarto, 1681. Though not strictly a Presbyterian book, yet it is a powerful exposure of the claims of Prelacy, and is written with a freedom and ease unusual in many of the works of Owen. Contending as he did, not only for Parity in the Ministry, but for Courts of Review, and the Divine authority of the office of Ruling Elder, he may justly be reckoned a Presbyterian, when writing the above work, which he did but a few years before his death. On his death-bed, according to Wodrow, he declared himself a Presbyterian.

* There is a posthumous work by David Clarkson, published in London in 1688, entitled 'Primitive Episcopacy stated and cleared from the Holy Scriptures, and Ancient Records.' 12mo. pp. 235. The object is to show, and it is done with great learning, that the primitive episcopacy was not an *oversight* of a number of pastors, as prelatists allege, out of a single congregation, and that it was therefore presbyterian.

* Mr. Clarkson also left 'A Discourse concerning Liturgies.' London, 1689, which displays immense learning.

* A Historical Account of the Ancient Culdees, by John Jamieson, D. D. 4to. Edinburgh, 1811. This is a very learned work, and a very triumphant vindication of the Presbyterianism of the Culdees against the misrepresentations of Bishop Lloyd and others.

* Cook's History of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution, 3 volumes, 8vo. Edinburgh, 1815.

* Dr. McCrie on the Unity of the Church. Edinburgh, 1821.

* Ibid, Life of Knox, 2 volumes, 8vo.

* Ibid, Life of Andrew Melville, 2 volumes, 8vo.

* Ibid, Miscellaneous Writings, thick 8vo.

* Powell on the Apostolical Succession. 1841.

* Hetherington's History of the Ch. of Scotland, thick 8vo. 1842.*

* Knox's History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland, and other works, reprinted at Glasgow, 1832.

* Sketches of Scottish Church History, by the Rev. Thomas McCrie. Edinburgh, 1841.

* Lectures on the Headship of Christ. Glasgow, 1840.

* Manual of Presbytery, by the Rev. John G. Lorimer. Edinburgh, 1842.

* The Deaconship, by the same author. Edinburgh, 1842.

* The Eldership of the Church of Scotland, by the same author. — Glasgow, 1841.

* A Historical Sketch of the Protestant Church in France, by the same author. Edinburgh, 1841. Thick 12mo.

* History of the Waldenses, by the Rev. Adam Blair, in 2 volumes, thick 8vo. Edinburgh, 1832. These volumes contain all the original documents.

* The History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, by the Rev. James Seaton Reid, D. D. in 3 volumes, 8vo. 2 vols. already published.

* Presbyterianism Defended by Ministers of the Synod of Ulster. Glasgow, 1839. 12mo.

* The Plea of Presbytery in behalf of the Ordination, Government, Discipline, and Worship of the Christian

* We pass over Wodrow, Buchanan, and Spaulding.

Church, as opposed to the unscriptural character and claims of Prelacy, by the same authors; thick 12mo. Glasgow, 1840. A second edition has been issued at Belfast, Ireland, which is enlarged. This we have also. We rejoice in being able to commend these powerful works by men with whom we have had a collegiate acquaintance.

* Schism as opposed to the Unity of the Church: especially in the Present Times, by the Rev. Dr. Hoppus. London, 1839, 2d ed. thick 12mo. page 592.
* On Protestant Nonconformity, by Josiah Conder, 2 volumes, 8vo. London, 1818.
* Congregationalism, or the Polity of Independent Churches, by Robert Vaughan, D. D. 1842.
* The Protestant Dissenters' Catechism, by the Rev. Samuel Palmer. London, 1839, the 21st edition.
* Religion and Education in America, by John Dunmore Lang, D. D.— London, 1840.
* Sketch of the History and Principles of the Presbyterian Church in England. London, 1840.
* An Apology for the Church of Scotland, by the Rev. J. Cumming. London, 1837.*

To these might be added, though written by Episcopalians,—

* The Kingdom of Christ Delineated, by Archbishop Whately. London, 1842.
* The Catholic Character of Christianity as recognised by the Reformed Church, by Frederick Nolan, L.L.D. London, 1839.
* The Presbyterian Review. Edinburgh. Many valuable articles, on various points connected with Presbytery, will be found ably handled in this work.
* The Life and Times of Alexander Henderson, by Dr. Aiton, contains, beside much else that is important, all the papers presented by Henderson to King Charles.
* A very clear view of the Controversy will also be found in Hill's Lectures on Divinity. Volume 3d, English edition.
* Also in Dick's Theology. Volume 4th, English edition.

* A host of able pamphlets have been lately issued in Scotland, many of which we possess, but it is unnecessary to enumerate them.

* The History of Protestant Nonconformity in England, by Thomas Price, D. D. 2 volumes, 8vo. London, 1838, &c.
* Dr. Cook's View of Christianity. Volume iii. chap. 1.
* A Cloud of Witnesses for the Royal Prerogatives of Jesus Christ, &c. Aberdeen, 1778.
* Faithful Contendings Displayed, being an Historical Account, &c. &c., by Michael Shields, 1780.
* Testimony-bearing Exemplified, &c., 1791, including Gillespie sgainst Association with Malignants. The Informatory Vindication, &c.
* Napthali, or the Wrestlings of the Church of Scotland for the Kingdom of Christ, &c., 1780.
* The Scots' Worthies, by McGavin, 2 volumes. 8vo. 1831.
* Jus Populi Vindicatum, by Mr. James Stewart.
* The Explanation and Application of the Solemn League and Covenant, &c, by the Rev. Richard Ward, member of the Assembly, reprinted 1737.
* View of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, by George Hill, D. D., 1803, 3d edition just issued.
* Hill's Practice in the several Judicatories of the Church of Scotland. edition 4th, 1840.
* Stewart's Collections and Observations Methodized, concerning the worship, &c. of the Church of Scotland. 1709.
* Compendium of the Laws of the Church of Scotland and of the Acts of the Assembly, with a Supplement by Alexander Peterkin, 3 volumes, 12mo.
* Annals of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland from 1739 to 1766. 2 volumes, 1838.
* Acts of the Assembly from 1638 to 1649. Printed in 1682.
* The Books of Discipline and of Common Order. 1836.
* The Book of the Universal Kirk of Scotland, 1839, 8vo.
* Styles and Procedure of the Church Courts in Scotland, 1838, 8vo.
* Catechism of the History of the Church of Scotland, by Rev. Benjamin Laing. 1842.
* Exposition of the Principles of the Church of Scotland in regard to Admission of Pastors. 1842.

§ 3. *Works on Presbyterianism, by American Authors.*

In the Dudleian Lectures will be found many valuable Discourses on the Safety and Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, viz:

Mr. Appleton's Lecture, delivered in the year 1758.

Dr. Chauncey's Lecture, delivered in the year 1762.

Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton's Lecture, delivered in the year 1776.

Rev. Amos Adams's (of Roxbury,) Lecture, delivered in the year 1770.

Rev. Mr. Webster's Lecture, delivered in the year 1774.

Rev. John Tucker's, (Pastor of First Church in Newbury,) Lecture, delivered in the year 1778.

Rev. Samuel West's, (of Dartmouth,) Lecture, delivered in the year 1782.

Rev. William Symmes's, (of Andover,) Lecture, delivered in the year 1786.

Rev. Jeremy Belknap's Lecture, delivered in the year 1790.

Rev. Zabdiel Adams's Lecture, delivered in the year 1794.

Rev. Samuel Haven, D. D., Lecture, delivered in the year 1798.

Rev. David Osgood, D. D., Lecture, delivered in the year 1802.

Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D., Lecture, delivered in the year 1806.

Rev. Abel Holmes, D. D., Lecture, delivered in the year 1810.

Rev. Hezekiah Packard's Lecture, delivered in the year 1814.

Rev. Abiel Abbot's Lecture, delivered in the year 1818.

Rev. Joseph Tuckerman's Lecture, delivered in the year 1822.

Rev. Dr. Parker's Lecture, delivered in the year 1826.

* Rev. William Allen, D. D., Lecture, delivered in the year 1830.

* Rev. Adam Lamson's Lecture, delivered in the year 1834.

* Rev. George Noyes's Lecture, delivered in the year 1838.

The Ruling and Ordaining Power of Congregational Bishops or Presbyters Defended, by Mr. Foxcroft.—Boston, 1724. In Harvard College Library.

A Defence of Presbyterian Ordination, by Jonathan Dickinson, of Elizabethtown, N. J. Boston, 1724.—In do.

A Complete View of Episcopacy, as exhibited in the Fathers until the close of the second century, by Dr. Chauncey. pp. 474. Boston, 1771.

The Scripture Bishop Vindicated, or the Divine Right of Presbyterian Ordination and Government, by Eleutherus V. D. M. Boston, 1733. In Old South Library.

Vindiciæ Ministerii Evangelici, by John Collings, M. A., a Preacher of God's Word in Norwich. London, 1651. 4to. In Old South Library

* The Divine Right of Presbyterian Ordination Asserted, and the Ministerial Authority Claimed and Exercised by the Churches of New England, Vindicated and Proved, by Noah Welles, Pastor of the Church at Stamford. New York, 1763.

* A Vindication of the Validity and Divine Right of Presbyterian Ordination, by the same author. New Haven, 1767. 12mo. p. 159. These are both exceedingly well conducted arguments.

* A Collection of Essays on the subject of Episcopacy, which appeared originally in the Albany Sentinel. New York, 1806.

* Essay on Episcopacy, being a Review of the preceding work, by John Mason, D. D., and now published in his Works, volume 3.

* Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry, addresse d to the Members of the Presbyterian Churches in the City of New York, &c. &c., by Dr. Miller. Large octavo, 2d edition. Philadelphia, 1800.

* The Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church, by the same author. This work was republished in Glasgow in 1835, with an Introductory Essay by the Rev. William Lindsay, of which I have a copy.

* Presbyterianism the Truly Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ, by the same author. This also has been republished in Scotland, by Mr. Lorimer, and in Belfast, Ireland.

* Letters to Presbyterians, by the same author. Philadelphia, 1833.

* The Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions, by the same author. 1839.

* The Primitive and Apostolical Order of the Church of Christ Vindicated, by the same author. 1840.

* The Primitive Government of Christian Churches and Liturgical Considerations, by James P. Wilson,

D. D. Philadelphia, 1833. 12mo. pp. 572. This is a work of very great and original research.

Illustrations of the Character and Conduct of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia, by John Holt Rice, D. D. Richmond, 1816.

Review of Bishop Ravenscroft's Vindication and Defence, by the same author, in the Evangelical Magazine, volumes 9 and 10.

Essays on the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church, by the same author, in the same.

* Historical and Philosophical Considerations on Religion, by the same author. Richmond, 1822.

* High-Church Principles opposed to the Genius of our Republican Institutions, by the same author. See its substance given in Lectures on the Apostolical Succession, p. 335, &c.

* The Scriptural Argument for Episcopacy Examined, by the Rev. Albert Barnes. 1835.

* The Apostolic Church, by the same author. 1843.

* An Ecclesiastical Catechism, by Alexander McLeod, D. D.

* The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, by Charles Hodge, D. D. 2 volumes, 8vo.

* Spence's Letters on the Early History of the Presbyterian Church in America. Philadelphia, 1838.

* The Claims of 'Episcopal Bishops' Examined, in a series of Letters, by Rev. George Duffield. New York, 1842. Second edition.

* An Original Church of Christ, or a Scriptural Vindication of the Orders and Powers of the Ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by Nathan Bangs, D. D. New York, 1837. Second edition.

* A History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, compiled for the Board of Publication, by A. Alexander. D. D. Philadelphia, 1841.

* The Biblical Repertory will be found an invaluable repository of valuable articles on Presbyterian Doctrine, Order, and Polity. This Review should be in the hands of every bishop, elder, and intelligent laymen, connected with the presbyterian church.

The author may now be permitted to add his own contributions to the resources of the student, in examining the subject:

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OF

# APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION

EXAMINED,

AND THE PROTESTANT MINISTRY DEFENDED AGAINST THE ASSUMPTIONS OF POPERY AND HIGH CHURCHISM,

**In a Series of Lectures.**

BY THOMAS SMYTH,

*Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Charleston, S. C.*

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

**Overture adopted by the Synod of S. Carolina and Geo. at its session in 1841.**

That the publication of works intended to advocate the distinctive order and polity of our church should be encouraged, and their circulation among our people rendered as general as possible; and it having come to the knowledge of this Synod, that one of their number, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, has recently given to the Church, among other valuable publications, 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members,'—and a series of lectures on 'The Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the Assumptions of Popery and High-Churchism.' Therefore, *Resolved*, That the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia regard with pleasure and approbation these publications, as containing an able defence of the divine authority of the Protestant Ministry, and a full and satisfactory exposition of the order and government of our Church; and as demanded by the present state of the controversy on these subjects. And the Synod does, therefore, cordially recommend the said publications to all our Ministers, Elders, and private members, as works of high value, and calculated to advance the intelligence of our Church, on our distinctive peculiarities and doctrines.

**Extract from a review of the work in the Biblical Repertory, for Jan'y, 1841.**

'This book does no small credit to the industry and talent of the author. The importance of his subject, the correctness of his views, and the abundance of materials which he seems to have had at his command, entitle his performance to the most respectful notice. The author's mind is not only strong but lively, and his book exhibits traces of both qualities. The natural, (and may we not say,) national, vivacity with which he seizes on his topics and discusses them, enlivens in a very satisfactory degree even those parts of the subject which might otherwise have proved most irksome and fatiguing. In a word, the book, (which by the way is elegantly printed,) may be freely commended to the favorable notice of the public; and we doubt not that wherever it is read it will be useful, in apprising those who read it what the high church doctrine really is, and on what grounds it may be most triumphantly and easily refuted.'

From the Southern Christian Advocate.

'We have the pleasure to announce the probable publication of these Lectures at no distant day. As far as opportunity has allowed it, we have attended Mr. Smyth's course, and been both pleased and edified. Pleased, in witnessing a fine combination of candor, kindness, and strength, in the discussion of difficult and soul-rousing questions. Edified, in listening to a vigorous discussion of important first principles, where the lecturer was master of his thesis, and backed his reasoning by extensive authority of the highest value in this controversy. This volume, in which the Prelatic Doctrine of Apostolical Succession is considered, will be highly valuable to the theological student.'

From the Christian Intelligencer, of the Reformed Dutch Church, N. Y.

'This is an exceedingly neat volume of five hundred and sixty-eight pages, beautiful in its mechanical execution, and upon a subject of grave and exciting importance. The work is seasonable, and from the cursory examination which we have as yet been able to give to it, we believe that it will prove to be exceedingly valuable. The work before us, at the present crisis, is seasonable and necessary. It is more ample in its discussion than any that preceded it. It is the result of much and patient research, and will be found to reflect credit alike upon the talents and learning, and we will add also, the temper of the author. He has rendered the Protestant community a debtor. We desire that the work may have the widest circulation, and receive the careful perusal both of Episcopalians and Christians of every other name.'

From the Christian Advocate and Journal, of the Methodist Church, N. Y.

'This is a large octavo volume. The author makes thorough work of his subject, examining the pretensions of Prelacy with care and candor, and exposing their fallacy with unanswerable force and perspicuity. He gives the claims which are set up by Popery and High-Churchmen in their own language, and refutes them by arguments drawn from reason, church history, and Scripture. The Christian world seems to be waked up anew to the high and exclusive claims of Prelacy by the astounding assumptions of the Oxford divines; and we admit that such a book as that before us seems to be called for by the occasion, and will no doubt be read with great interest.'

From the New York Evangelist.

'A large and elegant octavo volume, on a most important topic. Its object is the examination of the claims of the Popish hierarchy, and of that portion of the clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church which sympathizes with them, to the exclusive right to the functions and privileges of the Christian ministry and Church. These claims, always unscriptural, have of late assumed new arrogance and vigor, by the brief currency of the Oxford publications, and the greatly quickened zeal of the Papacy among us. The time has certainly arrived when their exclusive notions should be subjected to the searching test of reason and scripture. If there are those among us who will vauntingly assume that theirs is the only, the valid ministry, that with them are to be found the only authorized ordinances of salvation, that there is no safety but within the pale of their own denomination; let their pretensions be sifted, and the emptiness of their claims be exposed by the clear light of truth. That such a contest with the principle of Prelacy is yet to be waged, and that it is to be abandoned, there can be no doubt. We hail every effort to throw light upon the subject. Mr. Smyth has entered vigorously upon the field of controversy, and has spared neither pains or strength to do it justice. He has gone over the whole ground in a more extended manner than any writer before him in this country, and in an able manner.'

From The Presbyterian.

'The volume before us contains a very full and minute discussion of the doctrine indicated in its title, and is to be followed by another which will vindicate the claims of Presbyterianism. The necessity of the work arises from the

increasing boldness and arrogance with which the Episcopal Church obtrudes its claims as the only true church, with the only valid ordinances, and the only divinely constituted ministry. As to the manner in which he has accomplished his task, we are disposed to judge very favorably, from the necessarily partial manner in which we have been able to examine his work. He has acquired a clear and distinct view of the question discussed in all its bearings, and to each specific point he has brought a mind stored with the fruits of extensive reading. We have admired the extent of his research, and his diligence in learning all that had been said by preceding writers which could throw light on the discussion; and indeed we have rather regarded him as too redundant in his authorities; a fault, by the way, not often committed in this age of jumping at conclusions. Mr. Smyth states the question of Apostolic succession, so much in the mouth of modern Episcopalians, and he views it in all possible lights, weighs it in just balances, and pronounces it wanting. He not only proves that the assumption is unscriptural and unreasonable, but he traces the boasted succession, and shows its broken links, and finds after all the flourish of trumpets, that prelatists are glorying in a mere shadow. He carries the war, moreover, into the enemy's camp, and he carries off many trophies. Mr. Smyth is undoubtedly an able controversialist, and prelatists will find him well armed at all points, if they are disposed to attack.'

From the Southern Christian Advocate.

'The work before us is, we believe, the first distinct treatise published in this country on the subject of the Apostolical Succession, and in opposition to its arrogant assumptions. A very ably argued and well written work has been recently given to the English public, entitled 'An Essay on Apostolical Succession,' by the Rev. Thomas Powell, a Wesleyan minister, of which Mr. Smyth makes honorable mention. We consider, therefore, the publication of these Lectures as a valuable contribution to the religious literature of the time, demanded withal by the claims of that portion of our common Christianity, which is so unfortunate as to have no participation in the anointing oil of prelatical consecration, and which lies beyond the range of apostolico-succession-covenant blessing. Mr. Smyth has executed his task in a candid, kind, and courteous spirit, while he has subjected the theory of Apostolical Succession to the scrutiny of a thorough, extensive, and fearless examination. Innumerable authorities are cited, and a copious index concludes the volume, which embraces upwards of five hundred and sixty-nine pages, and is gotten up in the finest finish of the typographical art.'

From the Charleston Observer.

'Notice was taken of these Lectures while in course of delivery. They are now published, and with the notes, which contain as much reading as the text, make a large volume of five hundred and sixty-eight pages. The typographical execution is in the best modern style, from the press of Crocker and Brewster, Boston. Our design, at present, is simply to apprise our readers that the work is published, intending at our leisure to give it a more formal notice. As the basis of the opinion controverted, rests upon what is familiarly known as the Apostolical Succession, it is here that the author has exhibited his chief strength. And were we to say that he has made good his position, it might be regarded as only a judgment expressed in accordance with previously existing prejudices in its favor. But we hope, on the other hand, that none will undertake to condemn it unread. The advocates of High-Churchism, whether Roman or Anglican, are chiefly concerned in the discussion, and possibly they may find in the work something that will moderate their exclusive zeal, and lead them to the exercise of more charity for the opinions of those from whom they differ.'

From The Presbyterian.

'Mr. Editor:—I ask room in your paper to commend this work to the attention of the ministers and intelligent laymen of our Church. If there be any among them who doubt whether a work of this sort was called for, their doubts will not survive the reading of the first Lecture, entitled 'The Necessity for an Exam-

ination into the Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession.' The discussion, therefore, in which Mr. Smyth has embarked, was provoked by the growing disposition among High-Church Episcopalians, to unchurch the Presbyterian body, and challenge exclusive salvation to the members of churches under Diocesan Bishops. His work is not an attack, but a defence—a defence conducted with great ability and skill. I venture to commend it to the notice of your readers, because I am satisfied they will be instructed and profited by the perusal of it. The lectures are evidently the result of much study, and very extensive research. No single volume I have seen, contains such a mass of authorities and seasonable testimonies, on the Prelatical controversy as this work. It is equally creditable to the author's talents and industry, that he should have found time to prepare, in the midst of his pastoral duties, an octavo of five hundred and fifty pages, on a subject requiring so much study, and involving an examination of several hundred distinct works on either side of the controversy. Such labors ought not to go unrequited; but his brethren will be rendering themselves and the cause of truth a substantial service, by placing it in their libraries; and it is for this reason that their attention is invited to it by one who has no other concern in it than that which is common to every Presbyterian.'

From the New York Observer.

'A formidable volume this is in appearance, and on this very account will repel many who might otherwise be attracted to examine its pages. In a course of twenty-one lectures the author has, with great industry and research, and no mean ability as a controversialist, examined the question before him, and presented, in the compass of a single book, a mass of testimony that must be of value to those whose time and means will not allow them to pursue the investigation through all the original sources, which Mr. Smyth has so perseveringly explored.'

From the Watchman of the South.

'We offer a few general remarks at present, intending at an early day to notice them, or at least that last named, far more fully than we usually do. One thing must strike every one who knows the history of the author of these works We refer to his industry. Without very firm bodily health, and having a very laborious pastoral charge, he still economizes time sufficient to bring out, through the press, from time to time, important contributions to the cause he loves. This is as it should be. Mr. Smyth is, of course, a *growing* minister. His influence and usefulness are constantly extending. It is also obvious to any one who reads Mr. Smyth's works, that he has, or has the use of a very good library, and is a man of no mean learning. His works show the importance of ministers' salaries being such as to enable them to 'give themselves to reading.' But Mr. Smyth is not a mere reader. He arranges and uses what he reads. His character as a writer rises every year. Mr. Smyth is also ardently attached to Presbyterianism. Further remarks may be expected in a week or two.'

From the Charleston Courier.

'We would call the attention of all those who profess any regard for the literary character of our southern community, to a work recently published by our esteemed fellow-townsman, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, entitled 'Lectures on the Apostolical Succession.' Whatever may be the opinion of the intelligent reader on the subjects of which it treats, he will acknowledge it to be a striking example of extensive and profound research, and most diligent investigation. The author appears to have enjoyed some remarkable advantages in the prosecution of his inquiries. Possessing, as he does, one of the best private libraries in this country—probably the most complete in the theological department—he has had access to an immense mass of authorities, not usually within the reach of the American scholar, and his abundant and voluminous references make his book an absolute index for the use of future writers. His industry, indeed, has left but scanty gleanings, as it would appear, for any who may desire to follow him in this discussion. His style is easy and animated, and the interest of the reader is kept up, without flagging, through an octavo of nearly six hundred

pages. We hope the success of this highly creditable effort may be such as to induce the learned and reverend author to complete his task, by giving promptly to the public the second volume of his course, promised in his preface.'

From the Christian Observer.

'From a cursory examination of this work, we think it well adapted to accomplish the good purposes for which it is designed It exposes and refutes the extravagant assumptions of High-Churchmen, who claim to be the successors of the apostles in the ministry, exclusive of all those who reject their views of Prelacy. The work is worthy of a more extended notice, which shall be given at an early day.'

From the Christian Watchman. (Boston — a Baptist paper.)

'This volume has lain on our table a considerable time, to enable us to give it such an examination as the subject and the merits of the book demand. The discussion throughout is conducted with candor, impartiality, and kindness; and displays no small share of ability, learning, and diligent research. It is decidedly the most able and thorough vindication of the Presbyterian view of the subject which we have ever seen. The discussion, too, is timely, when Episcopal popery is receiving a new impulse from the Oxford writers, whose sentiments find so much sympathy even in our own land. We commend the book, therefore, to the attention of our brethren in the ministry, not as taking in every instance that ground which we, as Baptists and Independents should prefer to see taken, but as an able defence of the truth, and an extensive collection of authorities and facts.'

From the Christian Examiner and General Review, (Boston,) Nov. 1841.

'We by no means intend to intimate that the work is ill-timed or superfluous. Such is not our opinion. We believe it will do good. It will meet the new phase of the controversy, and supply what we have no doubt is, in some parts of our country, a pressing want. Even the greatest absurdities, iterated and reiterated in a tone of unblushing confidence, will gain some adherents. Besides, the old treatises on the subject are in a manner inaccessible to the general reader, and will produce a deeper impression, even if it be not more applicable, which in ordinary cases it will be, to the state of the times. The present volume we regard as not only suited to the times, but in itself a production of no trifling merit. It indicates great industry, and no little research on the part of the writer, and its statements appear, from such an examination as we have been able to give it, entitled to confidence. . . . There is an earnestness, good temper and thoroughness which mark the work, which we like, and we can very cordially commend it to the attention of all who feel an interest in the subject.'

From the Southern Quarterly Review.

'This is one of the ablest works of theological controversy, that has appeared during the present century, and we are happy to be able to add that it is the production of a Charleston clergyman. . . . We say then, in the outset, that the Presbyterian church has, in our opinion, in the author of the work before us, a powerful champion, who wields a polished pen, and one who seems to be eminently fitted, by his learning, his talents, and his industry, to maintain manfully the cause he has espoused. We have read his book with deep interest, and with great respect for his ability, and the general candor and fairness of his arguments.' [April, 1843: pp. 534—537.

From the Magnolia, a Literary Magazine and Monthly Review.

'The Doctrine of Apostolical Succession is here examined in an elaborate course of Lectures, twenty-one in number, by the Rev. Thos. Smyth, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston. It is not within our province to examine them. We can say nothing, therefore, of the question which Mr. Smyth discusses. No doubt he discusses it ably. He certainly discusses it ear-

Of this production of his, I have the means of knowing, that *the venerable champion in the cause*, has privately declared 'that Mr. Smyth has quoted books in the controversy, which he had never had the privilege of seeing, and which were even rare in Europe.''

From the Honorable Mitchell King, of Charleston, S. C.

'Rev. and Dear Sir: — You have done a lasting service to the Presbyterian Church, by the publication of your work on the Prelatical Doctrine of the Apostolical Succession. The question which you there discuss has assumed in our times a renewed importance, from the efforts recently made to claim for particular bodies of Christians an exclusive right to the benefits of that covenant of grace, which Christ came to make with all true believers. This question was, as you and I believe, long ago settled by the [illegible] conclusive arguments of men worthy, if mortal men can be worthy, of the great cause in which they were engaged; who were influenced solely by the love of truth, and followed that, wherever it might lead them, without regard to merely human authority; and many of whom sealed their testimony with their blood. These times have passed away. But earnest endeavors have been lately made, to shake the confidence of many Christians in the principles of their fathers, and to overthrow their faith in that Church which we believe to be founded on the words of everlasting life. Your work, therefore, I consider as most seasonable and valuable, as reviving and spreading the knowledge of the fundamental truths on which our Church rests. It contains a fuller review of the reasonings and authorities on this subject, than any other work with which I am acquainted, and will, I am persuaded, henceforth be an armory in which the defenders of Presbyterianism can find weapons of proof ready prepared for them. That you may go forward in the course which you have so honorably begun, and that the Great Head of the Church may follow your labors with his rich blessing, is the earnest prayer of, Rev'd and Dear Sir, yours very truly, M. KING.

From the Rev. John Bachman, D. D., of the German Lutheran Church, Charleston, S. C.

'My Dear Sir: — To my mind your Lectures on the Apostolical Succession covers the whole ground, and is, without exception, the most triumphant vindication of our views on this subject, that I have ever read. I regard the work as the most valuable contribution that has ever been made to the Southern Church.'

AN

# ECCLESIASTICAL CATECHISM

OF THE

# PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

**For the use of Bible Classes, Families, and Private Members.**

THIRD EDITION, MUCH IMPROVED.

*This work has been submitted to the revision of the* Rev. Samuel Miller, d. d. *and many others, and is now published, as approved by them, and with their emendations.*

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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

**Overture adopted by the Synod of S. Carolina and Geo. at its session in 1841.**

That the publication of works intended to advocate the distinctive order and polity of our Church should be encouraged, and their circulation among our people rendered as general as possible; and it having come to the knowledge of this Synod, that one of their number, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, has recently given to the Church, among other valuable publications, 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members,'—and a series of Lectures on 'The Prelatical Doctrine of Apostolical Succession Examined, and the Protestant Ministry Defended against the Asumptions of Popery and High Churchism.' Therefore, *Resolved*, That the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia regard with pleasure and approbation these publications, as containing an able defence of the divine authority of the Protestant Ministry, and a full and satisfactory exposition of the order and government of our Church; and as demanded by the present state of the controversy on these subjects. And the Synod does, therefore, cordially recommend the said publications to all our Ministers, Elders, and private members, as works of high value, and calculated to advance the intelligence of our Church, on our distinctive peculiarities and doctrines.

**From the Biblical Repertory, for January, 1841.**

'Mr. Smyth must be regarded as among the most efficient and active authors in the Presbyterian Church.' His valuable work on the 'Apostolical Succession,' reviewed in a preceding part of this number, is a monument of his reading and industry, which has been extensively acknowledged. The 'Ecclesiastical Catechism' before us, is another present to the Church with which Mr. Smyth is connected, which we think adapted to be universally esteemed, and highly useful. It is, as all such manuals ought to be, brief, comprehensive, simple, adapted to weak capacities, and yet sufficiently instructive to gratify the most intelligent minds. The Scriptural quotations to illustrate and establish the principles he lays down, are perhaps, in some cases, unnecessarily numerous, and in a few instances, of questionable application. But it is on the whole so well executed, and possesses so much solid merit, that we hope it may be extensively circulated and used.'

From the Rev. Geo. Howe, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia.

'The design and the execution are excellent. It contains a more complete explanation of the order and government of our Church, than I have ever before seen in so small a compass. I think it admirably adapted to the purposes for which it was designed, and could wish to see it in every Presbyterian family, and studied by all our young people, as an appendix to the doctrinal catechisms.'

From The Presbyterian.

'We have received a neat and well-printed little volume of one hundred and twenty-four pages, entitled 'An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, for the use of Families, Bible Classes, and Private Members:' by Rev. Thomas Smyth, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Charleston, S. C., into which the author has compressed a large amount of very valuable matter, explanatory and illustrative of Church order, and which we regard as particularly serviceable at the present time, as supplying a desideratum in the education of Presbyterian youth. Although the author modestly remarks, that his Catechism is an *attempt* rather than an actual *accomplishment* of all that he believes to be demanded by the necessities of the Church, yet from the attention we have been able to bestow on it, we should regard the execution of the attempt as highly creditable, and we believe the book to be deserving of an immediate adoption in the instruction of the youth of our Church.'

From the Christian Intelligencer, of the Reformed Dutch Church, N. Y.

'The members of the Presbyterian Church should possess a full and satisfactory acquaintance with the principles of Presbyterian government, polity, and worship. This little volume is exceedingly well adapted to aid in gaining this acquaintance, and is suited for general and popular use. While industrious efforts are employed by other denominations in opposition to these principles, it is highly important and desirable that a popular manual, in elucidation and vindication of their creeds, as is provided in this volume, should be circulated. The following are the subjects of the chapters, each of which contains several sections, or subdivisions:—I. The Church. II. Governments of the Church. III. Officers of the Church. IV. Courts of the Church. V. Power of the Church. VI. Fellowship of the Church. VII. Relation of the Presbyterian Church to other denominations. The catechetical form of the work, and the copious scripture-references and authorities, adapt it to the use of instruction. Such a volume as this was needed; and we feel indebted to Mr. Smyth for the preparation of it, as we deem it, in matter and manner, meeting the desideratum required.'

From the Charleston Observer.

'Of the first edition of this work we spoke in terms of commendation. But this is a very considerable improvement, not only in the style in which it is gotten up—for it is very neatly printed and bound—but in the arrangement and matter. It supplies a place that is [illegible] and will be received merely as an *attempt* to furnish the Church with a brief compend of her worship and polity. As a denomination, we have been remiss in the duty of letting the principles and polity of our Church be generally known. Many of our own members need information on this subject, that they may be established in the truth and order of the house of God. And information is needed also by others, to correct the erroneous impressions respecting it, which have been designedly or undesignedly made upon their minds. The work deserves general circulation.'

From the New York Observer.

'The preparation of this little work was the result of a suggestion by Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton; and in it the author has presented the peculiar features of the form of Government in the Presbyterian Church, in questions and answers, and in simple language, that the sentiments inculcated may be readily learned and remembered by the young.'

From the Protestant and Herald.

'MR. EDITOR:—During the past winter, the Female Bible Class of my pastoral charge, have memorized '*The Ecclesiastical Catechism*,' prepared by the Rev. Thomas Smyth, of Charleston, South Carolina. I make this statement in your columns, in order to excite and secure the attention of your readers to the utility and value of that little volume. The ladies have manifested an unusual degree of delight and enthusiasm in their recitations. The result has been, if I mistake not, 'a full and comprehensive acquaintance with the principles of the worship and polity of our Church.' Such was the hope of its worthy and able author in the preparation of his book. The proof-texts are generally printed at length in the Catechism. Without attempting an analysis of this book, allow me to urge Pastors, and Ruling Elders, and Deacons, and Sunday School Teachers in our Churches, to procure this interesting and attractive and cheap compend of Church order, and indoctrinate their families and pupils into these cherished principles of our denomination. Are we not, as a body of people, quite remiss in this high duty? Let the standard-bearers in our host, bestir themselves as they ought, to circulate this work, as a Presbyterian Sabbath School book, and make it, if you please, what it deserves to be, next to our Larger and Shorter Catechism—*a Presbyterian classic* in all our family instructions.'

From the Magnolia, a Literary Magazine and Monthly Review.

'This little volume was meant for, and is acknowledged to have supplied a want, among the members of the Presbyterian Church. It is a copious compilation, containing a large amount of religious information, and we take for granted, that, among the class of Christians for whose use it was prepared, it is far superior to any thing of the sort which had ever been offered them before. It shows industry, reading, and analysis.'

From the American Biblical Repository.

'This little volume is issued by the same publishers as the preceding work, by the same author. It is a well-digested system of questions and answers on the Church, its government,—its officers,—its courts,—its powers,—its fellowship, and the relation of the Presbyterian Church to other denominations. It is a useful manual for Presbyterians, and may be instructive to others.'

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## ECCLESIASTICAL REPUBLICANISM;

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OF THE

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